

The Bible Companion Series

Christianity in Action

The Acts of the Apostles

A Bible-Believing Study Guide

The Bible Companion Series of Bible Studies

These Study Notes Belong to: _____

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The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter One

The Church Commissioned

Focus Verse: **Acts 1:8**

"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

I. Chapter Introduction

- A. Christianity started with Jesus Christ. But just existing as Christians without a purpose, without motivation, without power is only empty!
- B. Christ's death, burial and resurrection had been the event that split history into two, and propelled a few ignorant fishermen and carpenters into a hostile world to bring it to God. That is the record of Acts. As Christians, we are to follow their examples, obtain the necessary courage, and seek to carry out the tasks that our Lord gave us to do - all through the power of the Holy Spirit!
- C. Acts Chapter 1 is divided up as follows:
 1. The Person of Jesus Christ (1:1-5)
 2. The Priorities of the Christian (1:6-8)
 3. The Promise of Christ's Return (1:9-11)
 4. The Patience Required (1:12-14)
 5. The Preparation to Serve - Mobilization (1:15-26)

II. Study Outline of Acts Chapter 1

- A. **The Person of Jesus Christ- Past, present and future ministry (1:1-5)**
 1. When Luke begins this Book, he immediately connects it with his previous Book, the *Gospel According to _____* and then covers the entire life, death, burial, resurrection, showing, and ascension of Jesus Christ - **all in four verses**. For the rest of the Book, he follows the lives of Christ's disciples in the continuing saga called "Christianity". Truly, *"the saga continues!"*
 2. It is addressed to a specific Reader - _____!
 3. *Theophilus!* _____ of ____! As we have already stated, the Bible has always been written primarily for God's people, and not for the atheist or agnostic! It is written from the standpoint of the believer with few exceptions which are directed at the sceptic. Whoever Theophilus was, this Book definitely was not only intended for him, but for all who would know how live the Christian life in today's world! It is written from the viewpoint of an eyewitness (Acts 16:10).
 4. The theme is _____ from start to finish (see Acts 1:1 and then 28:31)
 - a. The Book of Acts will cover the life that Jesus Christ lives through his disciples until His return for them in the clouds!
 5. The subjects dealt with by Jesus before his ascension (1:2-5):
 - a. The phrase *"through the Holy Ghost"* (1:2). A key phrase of Acts! A unique statement telling you that after Jesus ascended to heaven, He spoke by means of the Holy Ghost to His Apostles, giving them instructions, and informs us of the means by which Jesus continues to both "do and teach" even up until today! The same means of inspiration (2 Tim 3:16).
 - b. The resurrection, and its "_____ *proofs*" (1:3)
 - 1) Jesus is seen for forty days (Sunday He resurrects in the March or April time frame, and then ascends Thursday, 40 days later in late April or May sometime) by over ____ witnesses (1 Cor 15:6)
 - 2) The **fact** of an empty tomb and grave clothes (Mt 28; John 20:3-9)
 - 3) The **fact** that eleven men ate and lived with Him for those forty days (Luke 24:38-44)
 - 4) The **fact** that those eleven men actually "_____" Him (I John 1:1; John 20:28)
 - 5) The **fact** of the transformed lives of the eleven apostles, and of all who trust a living Saviour (2 Cor 5:17).
 - c. _____ (1:3; Matt 6:33; Rom 14:17)
 - 1) This one subject is about the most important thing that a Bible Believer could settle in his or her mind - what the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are. Suffice it to say here that Jesus is NOT discussing of things pertaining to the Kingdom of Heaven (millennium) because it is some two thousand years away, but rather a form of life that the body of Christ is to live out until the millennium. What is the millennium? It is the earthly visible reign of Jesus Christ on this earth for 1000 years (the Kingdom of Heaven), following the rapture and the seven year tribulation (Rev 19).

- d. The _____ of the Father (1:4,5; Luke 24:49)
- 1) A _____ (1:5), immersion - One of seven in Scripture
 - 2) An _____ (1:8), becoming "endued with power" (Luke 24:49) that comes from the Holy Spirit (John 14:16) - Comforter, Guide, Teacher, Helper.
 - 3) A _____ (2:2,4; 4:8,31) - of the heart and spirit of a Christian with the power and drive, and strength needed
 - 4) _____ - As a new body, the body of Christ, the Church is not to "relish" this gift, but use it for souls, and for the living of the Christian life (Cf Philp 2:5-8). All that Jesus did in His life and ministry, He did through the power of the Holy Ghost (John 3:34), not in the power of His deity! All so that He could show how WE can live

B. The Priorities of the Christian (1:6-8)

1. The Jew's primary desire - the restoration of "_____". People are always interested in a physical kingdom - empire where THEY have it made! This literal kingdom is promised (it makes up half of the old Testament promises), but is not our concern right now! Not the right timing.
2. Christians can get to where they are only looking forward to heaven and therefore do nothing here and now for God (Jude 25)!
3. Jesus' main desire was for them to get the power that they needed (from the Holy Spirit) to do the work that He was leaving them here on the earth to do! The fulfilling of the great commission (Matt 28:19-20) - invade enemy territory by presenting the truth about heaven, hell, salvation, and the human heart. Note the difference expressed between God's power to know the end from the beginning, and then Christ's declaration that Christians will have power also - power to do God's work in His stead here on earth as ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20). Jesus wanted:
 - a. For the Christian to be empowered (Eph 5:18) - they already had received the Holy Ghost by faith (John 20:22) and been sealed (Eph 1:13) with Him at salvation.
 - b. For the Christian to be a _____ - having experienced something that he or she can attest, testify as being true (1:8)
 - c. And be a witness throughout the world - starting right where they were - _____ and going until Christ returns!

C. The Promise of Christ's Return (1:9-11)

1. The ascension of Jesus Christ - This is the third _____ in Scripture (see Gen 5:21-24; 2 Kings 2:11 for the earlier two)
2. The heavenly visitors - Angels
 - a. These show up at Christ' birth (Luke 2 at His descension), and then here at his ascension.
 - b. Their gentle prod - *get moving because He is coming back!* This is not the last time that you see Him. The imminence of the return of Jesus was preached and believed by the Apostle Paul (1Thes 4:16,17)!
 - c. The information given here concerning the Second coming:
 - 1) Christ's return will be clouded to the view of the world
 - 2) Jesus will come down out of heaven
 - 3) He will come _____
 - 4) Angels will participate somehow
 - 5) The very same Jesus that left this planet, will return! No one will be taking His place (like a counterfeit "christ")!
 - 6) Jesus will arrive back here to this very spot - _____

D. The Patience Now Required (1:12-14) To wait, and serve, and look

1. The situation - the Captain has left them on their own with one instruction - go to Jerusalem and wait there until you get power! It is now Friday in probably early May, and about 120 disciples are gathered together in an upper room. The significance of this upper room- it is probably the one they had the last supper in
2. Note the names of the disciples and then those who were with the disciples - other women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Jesus' brethren (i.e., actual half-brothers and sisters!). No Judas Iscariot mentioned though! What happened to him? _____
3. This is where modern Christianity fails miserably - they hate _____ on God (Ps 27:14; Jam 5:7,8), _____ (Col 3:23,24), and _____ for Christ's return (Tit 2:13). They get bored too easily.

E. The Preparation to Serve - Mobilization (1:15-22) They have to overcome several problems:

1. The problem with _____. After the resurrection of Christ, there were over ____ disciples (1 Cor 15:6). But only ____ are at the prayer meeting, waiting for the "promise of the Father" (the arrival of the Holy Spirit). Christians have a hard time with priorities (see Demas in 2 Tim 4:10) and faithfulness to them (1 Cor 4:2).
2. Let's identify some of the priorities that both they and we need:
 - a. To be sure of our salvation - there is no greater priority!
 - b. To be in one accord - unity around the Scriptures (Acts 2:42)

- c. To love _____ (John 13:34)
 - d. To get the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8)
 - e. To be a witness (Acts 1:8) - by clear word and clean life
 - f. To be ready for Christ's return (Acts 1:11)
3. The problem with _____. Peter has been going over the pages of his Bible and he has thought about the importance of the number 12, and that something has been left undone by God - the filling of that 12th apostleship, and so Peter figures they need to fill Judas' place. Jesus said the labourers were few (Matt 9:36-38)
 4. So Peter takes the _____ - there is a danger here. Don't act until God tells you to act. Learn to wait on the Holy Spirit to direct you. And act on your current instructions. We definitely need initiative, but God-led initiative - obedience to Scriptures
 5. Reviews Judas' life (1:16-19)
 - a. He was a true apostle - with miracles and gifts (Matt 10:1,2)
 - b. Yet he was a _____ (John 6:70) that had to commit suicide by hanging himself on the edge of a cliff (Matt 27:5)
 - c. His body fell into the very field that the Pharisees purchased with the money Judas had sold Jesus out for (Matt 27:6-8)
 - d. Judas left a big vacancy - a "_____" (1:20) or managerial position - shepherd, overseer - not religious hierarchy (Ac 20:28; 1 Pet 2:25; 5:2-4)
 6. CONJECTURE - Peter possibly wrongly applies the _____ - it was too early to fill the vacancy - it will be filled by another man (1 Cor 15:8) which turned out to be _____
 7. Let's find out what it takes to be an Apostle - _____
 _____ (note the *signs*, 2 Cor 12:12):
 - a. Had to be _____ by Jesus Himself (John 6:70)
 - b. Had to be _____ to be an apostle - was not just a name (Mt 10:1,2)
 - c. Had to _____ Christianity (Eph 2:19,20) throughout world
 - d. Had to have been faithful throughout the ministry of Christ - from _____ baptism through Christ's resurrection (Cf 1 Ti 1:12,13). NO ONE after Acts 12 could meet that criteria.
 8. They chose a replacement (1:23-26) Only two people met the qualifications. To "cast lots" means to put the two names in a basket and draw out one. It turned out to be _____.

III. Conclusion