

Acts of the Apostles



Opening Prayer

Father, you created us and put us on earth for a purpose. Jesus, you died for us and called us to complete your work. Holy Spirit help us to carry out the work for which we were created and called. In your presence and name; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – we begin this time together. May all of our thoughts and inspirations have their origin in you and be directed to your glory.

- Amen

Acts of the Apostles

- Before starting Acts of the Apostles,,, read 1:1-4 of Luke's Gospel
- Then read 1:1-2 in Acts of the Apostles
- From this we know, Acts is a continuation of the same salvation story Luke started with his Gospel
- Jesus' salvation message is first initiated in the Gospels then continued through the Holy Spirit in Acts
- The two pivotal events within Acts of the Apostles are:

Pentecost (“Birthday of the Church”)



Paul's Conversion



The Revelation Process of Acts

- Events: God reveals himself through events (Pentecost, Paul's conversion, 1st Council, etc.)
- Oral Tradition: People talk about these events as faith experiences
- Written Tradition: Some oral traditions are gradually written down (sermons, letters, etc.)
- Edited Tradition: Luke edits the inherited traditions; "I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence..." (Lk 1:3)
- Canonical: The Church (faith community) embraces Luke's work as inspired by God

Acts Is For Our Salvation

- **Note: Luke's sources were not historians by our modern definition but "ministers of the word"**
- **They were answering questions like; "What is the significance of this event for our salvation?"**
- **Speeches, dialogues, etc. should not be viewed as exact quotations but as teaching techniques for the salvation message**
- **The main audience of a particular speech is not the listener portrayed in the text but the reading audience of the event**
- **Only crucial salvation events are included**
- **Various literary forms are used**

The Holy Spirit at Work

- **Even with Jesus' instructions the disciples could not figure out God's complete plan in advance**
- **God intervenes through the Holy Spirit at critical turning points in the story of Acts**
- **The disciples are NOT manipulated puppets**
- **They have to “figure out” the significance of their experiences (Act 10:9-15, 27-28)**
- **At some point Luke becomes an eye witness himself to many events (“we & I” sections in Acts 16:10-17, 20:5-15, 21:1-18, 27:1-28)**

The Scholars' Outline of Acts

- **Prep for the Christian Mission (1:1 – 2:13)**
Waiting in Jerusalem, replacing Judas, Pentecost
- **The Mission in Jerusalem (2:14 – 8:3)**
Peter's sermons, 1st Deacons, trial and death of Stephen
- **Mission in Judea and Samaria (8:4 – 9:43)**
Philip preaches in Samaria, Paul's conversion
- **Inauguration of the Gentile Mission (10:1 – 15:35)**
Cornelius' conversion, Paul's 1st Mission, 1st Council
- **Paul's Mission to the ends of the earth (15:36 – 28:31)** Paul's 2nd & 3rd Missionary Journeys, his arrest in Jerusalem, his journey to Rome

Paul's Missionary Journeys

- **Acts 13-14, from ~46 to ~49 AD**
 - **Generates the Jerusalem Council**
- **Acts 15:36-18:22, from ~50 to ~52 AD**
- **Acts 18:23-21:15, from ~53 to ~58 AD**
- **Acts 21:16-28:31, From ~59 to ~63 AD**
 - **Arrested in Jerusalem**
 - **Imprisoned in Caesarea**
 - **Sailed for Rome as a prisoner**
 - **Shipwrecked on Malta**
 - **Imprisoned in Rome**



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The Story of Acts

- The salvation which God offers us is the work of his mercy (**the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the ultimate message**)
- The Church is sent by Jesus Christ as the sacrament of the salvation offered by God
- God has found a way to unite himself to every human being in every age
- He has chosen to call a Church together as a people and not as isolated individuals
- No one is saved individually or by his or her own efforts

Evangelization is the task of the Church

- **REMEMBER; all of us are the Church!**
 - Evangelization is not simply the job of the organic institution
- **She (Church) is first and foremost a people advancing on its pilgrim way towards God**
- **She is a mystery rooted in Trinity**
- **She exists concretely in history as a people of pilgrims and evangelizers, transcending the physical institution**
- **The Church is a people for everyone!**

The Story of Acts Continues

- “There can be no true evangelization without the explicit proclamation of Jesus as Lord and without the primacy of the proclamation of Jesus Christ in all evangelizing work.” – John Paul II, 6 Nov 99
- “If the Church is to fulfill its providential destiny, evangelization as the joyful, patient, and progressive preaching of the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ must be your absolute priority.” – Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium

Surrender Prayer

Loving Father,

I surrender to you with all of my heart and soul. Please come into my heart in a deeper way. I say, “Yes” to you today. I open all of the secret places of my heart to you and say, “Come on in.” Jesus, you are Lord of my whole life. I believe in you and receive you as my Lord and Savior. I hold nothing back. Holy Spirit, bring me to a deeper conversion to the person of Jesus Christ. I surrender all to you; my health, my family, my resources, occupation, skills, relationships, time management, successes, and failures. I release them all and let them go. I surrender my understanding of how things ‘ought’ to be, my choices and my will. I surrender to you the promises I have kept and the promises I have failed to keep. I surrender my weaknesses and strengths to you. I surrender my emotions, my fears, my insecurities, my sexuality. I especially surrender my personal journey to you Father.

Lord God, I surrender my entire life to you, the past, the present, and the future. In sickness and in health, in life and in death, I belong to you.

- Amen