

GOSPEL of *Grace*
FELLOWSHIP

Acts – Part 1

Jesus Christ, the Living Lord

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F – L – I – G – H – T

F – The book of Acts, the Acts of the Apostles, is the sequel to the Gospel of Luke and the second book written by Luke. Luke was a physician, a traveling companion of the apostle Paul, and eyewitness to many of the events chronicled in Acts.

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F – L – I – G – H – T

F – Acts was written sometime after AD 60 and before AD 69. The book ends with Paul being imprisoned in Rome and doesn't provide any conclusion to his trial. It also doesn't mention the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. Luke wrote during the final events of Paul's life, before he was martyred for his faith.

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F – L – I – G – H – T

L – The Acts of the Apostles details the post-Great Commission history of the early church: how it was founded and organized, and how it responded to the problems it faced. Luke told the story of how this rapidly growing community of believers received the power of the Holy Spirit – the promised Counselor and Guide – and were enabled to witness, to love, and to serve the Lord.

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F – L – I – G – H – T

L – The apostles were at the forefront of this group, witnessing to Jerusalem and eventually the known world about their faith in Christ through personal testimony, preaching, and defending the good news before the authorities. They shared the gospel with boldness and courage, even when faced with imprisonment, beatings, plots, and riots.

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F – L – I – G – H – T

I

- Formation of Christianity (1-7)
- Transition to Christianity (8-12)
- Expansion of Christianity (13-28)

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F-L-I-G-H-T

G – Luke began the book of Acts by referring to the “former account” – the Gospel of Luke – about “all that Jesus began both to do and teach.” The Gospels recorded who Jesus was and what he did during his earthly ministry, but that was just the beginning of the story. Jesus didn’t stop working when he ascended into heaven. He passed the baton to his disciples, and, until he returns, he will continue the work he started.

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F-L-I-G-H-T

G – Redemption’s scarlet thread wove itself throughout the history of the OT – the fall in the Garden of Eden, the lives of the patriarchs, the kingdom of Israel, the prophets – and then burst into a bright splash of color in the NT, dominating the tapestry of the age of grace. The story of the early church shows us our ongoing role in the weaving of this tapestry.

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F-L-I-G-H-T

G – As God’s agents, we are to spread the good news of Jesus Christ. Everyone who puts their faith in Jesus Christ becomes a joint heir with him in his inheritance, but they also become his ministers to a lost world, called to share his worship, his Word, and his ways.

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F-L-I-G-H-T

H – The book of Acts chronicles the period of time between Jesus’ ascension and Paul’s imprisonment in Rome in the mid-60s AD. The thirty-year period covers the founding of the Christian church and the earliest missions.

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Acts in History

Years	Events
AD 30-35	Pentecost and the formation of the early church
AD 35-47	The church expanded into Judea and Samaria
ca. AD 44	James, the son of Zebedee and brother of John, was martyred
AD 47-48	Paul’s first missionary trip

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Acts in History

Years	Events
AD 49-52	Paul’s second missionary trip
AD 52-57	Paul’s third missionary trip
AD 60-62	Paul’s first imprisonment in Rome
ca. AD 66-67	Paul’s second imprisonment and martyrdom; Peter’s martyrdom

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F-L-I-G-H-T

H – The Roman emperors in power during this time were Caligula (AD 37-41), Claudius (AD 41-54), and Nero (AD 54-68).

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **Persecution advances God’s purposes.** In typical paradoxical fashion, persecution doesn’t hurt the church; it actually helps it grow. Instead of being surprised or hurt when the world persecutes us, we should prepare for it, keeping our focus on the Lord and the reward he promises to those who endure to the end – whatever that end may be.

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **Who is God to you?** Saul’s conversion to Christianity highlights two important questions: “Who are you, Lord?” and “What do you want me to do?” The Bible answers the first question, saying that Jesus is the Lord, the Son of God, the Savior of the World. Once you accept that, you can go on to the second question, which can only be answered by surrendering your life to God. He will guide you and help you find your role in his greater plan.

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **Who is the central character in the story of your life?** The book of Acts ends abruptly without saying what happens to Paul. Why? Because Paul wasn’t the central character of Acts – the Holy Spirit was, just as Jesus was the protagonist of the Gospels. The Spirit’s work has continued long after the life of Paul, a work in which you, thousands of years later, play a part. The bigger story is God’s.