

## **Key to ACTS**

### **1. BACKGROUND:**

The writer is Luke (same as third Gospel), physician, companion of the Apostle Paul (see Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24; II Timothy 4:11).

Date of writing about A.D. 63, possibly while Paul was in prison in Caesarea (Acts 24:27).

Contents: a divinely edited account of the history of early church.

### **2. THEME:**

While in his Gospel, Luke tells of what Jesus "**began**" to do, in the book of Acts, Luke tells of that which Jesus "continues" to do under the direction of the HOLY SPIRIT, through the dedicated instrumentality of consecrated men and women. The central theme is still "CHRIST," but now it is the risen, living, empowering CHRIST who challenges His believers to "**go ye into all the world**" with the matchless story of GOD's love.

### **3. MAIN DIVISIONS:**

(Acts 1:8)

The "**power**" comes (1);  
the witness in Jerusalem (3-5);  
the witness in Judea (6; 7);  
the witness in Samaria (8);  
the witness to all the earth (9-28).

### **4. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

Here is GOD's pattern for His Church. The principles enunciated here furnish a norm for all Christian living, for all church activity, for all missionary procedure. The book pulsates with a new life . . . that of the HOLY SPIRIT. He is everywhere seen as the Director, Source of Power, Comforter, Edifier. The title could well be "The Acts of the HOLY SPIRIT."

Great prominence is given to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, especially as to His resurrection. The newly empowered organism, the Church, is prominent too, as well as places, persons (110 names given), witnessing, prayer, preaching, persecution, divine power.

### **5. OUTLINE:**

#### **The Church at Jerusalem**

Prayer and Pentecost (1; 2)  
First Miracle (3)  
Growth, Persecution (4; 5)

Deacons (6)  
Stephen (7)

### **The Church in Palestine**

Phillip in Samaria (8)  
Saul Converted (9)  
Peter and Gentiles (10; 11)  
Peter Delivered (12)

### **The Church of the Gentiles**

First Missionary Tour (13; 14)  
Council at Jerusalem (15)  
Second Missionary Tour (15-18)  
Third Missionary Tour (18-21)  
Last Days of Paul (21 - 28)

## **6. OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:**

The day of Pentecost is the descent of the HOLY SPIRIT upon the Church.

Paul is our pattern too. Three times he is led to say, "**Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.**"

The Church's most important decision of all time . . . salvation is by grace through faith, not of works (see chapter 15).

The Church is missions, and missions is the Church. These can never be separated. The group of believers at Antioch is a sample (see 13:1-4; 14:26-28).

## **7. KEY:**

This important book is GOD's great instruction volume for procedure and advance. All Christians, all churches, all missionary societies and Christian enterprises should know its principles thoroughly.

This is the greatest book of missions in the world. It is also the greatest book on church organization and procedure. Nor should missions and the church be separated. Neither one is complete without the other.

~ end of Acts ~

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