

PRECEPT
UPON
PRECEPT®

Acts

PART 1

JESUS' WITNESSES
EMPOWERED BY
HIS SPIRIT
(CHAPTERS 1-12)

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ACTS PART 1
JESUS' WITNESSES EMPOWERED BY HIS SPIRIT
(CHAPTERS 1-12)

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE

How to Study Your Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010

The New Inductive Study Bible—New American Standard Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2000

Greek Word Study Tools

RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

LONGMAN III, TREMPER; GARLAND, DAVID E., eds.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Volume 10, Luke–Acts, Revised Edition

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 2007

WALVOORD, JOHN F.; ZUCK, ROY B., eds.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament

Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1983-c1985

POLHILL, JOHN B.

The New American Commentary, Vol. 26, Acts

Nashville, Tennessee: B & H Publishing Group, 1995

RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

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LESSON ONE

Chapter One

THIS LESSON INCORPORATES The following located in the Appendix:
Observation Worksheet of Acts 1
“Map of Israel”
“Map of Jerusalem”
“Acts at a Glance”
Word studies
Cross-references

POWER

Power to be what God wants you to be!
Power to do what God wants you to do!
It’s yours for the believing!

As we prepare this inductive Precept course on the book of Acts, it seems this is “the hour”—the time to learn from the apostles what it means to be His witnesses, Christ-followers in the midst of a “crooked and perverse generation.”

If you are aware of what is transpiring in the nations, you can sense the increasing conflict between the darkness and light. And if you know the whole counsel of God, you should be keenly aware that the day of the Lord is drawing near. If ever there was a need to understand and do the will of God, it is now!

May you discover for yourself, through this study, what it means to be His faithful witness even to the remotest part of the earth. And may you hear His “Well done!”

DAY ONE

The secret to handling God’s Word accurately is to observe, observe, observe His Word—to hang on His every God-breathed word. As Luke brought his Gospel to a conclusion, he wrote that Jesus “opened their [the eleven apostles and those with them] minds to understand the Scriptures” (Luke 24:45). May this be your prayer as you begin.

1. Since the book of Acts is an historical account, we are going to study it chapter by chapter, allowing the story to unfold before us. It is our prayer that in doing so you will begin to live the story. That you will be eager and hungry to know all that transpires in the lives of those whose story it is. Eagerness that it continue in you!
2. In the Appendix of this workbook, you'll find what we call "Observation Worksheets" for the first twelve chapters of Acts. They are just that—worksheets to be observed and marked in a way that will help you discover for yourself exactly what God says chapter by chapter in Acts, information He wants you to know, understand, and live by.

Read through Acts 1 and mark the following, using a distinctive color or a combination of colors and/or a colored symbol for each. For this it will be helpful to make a **Key Word Bookmark**. List the following words and mark them the way you will throughout Acts. You can do this on the blank side of the card on the back cover of your workbook. On the other side of the card, you'll see marking suggestions for some words frequently used in the Bible. Below we've indicated words from this list with an asterisk.

- a. *Jesus**
 - b. *the Holy Spirit**
 - c. *Peter, the apostles* (Mark these the same way.)
 - d. *baptized*
 - e. geographical locations,* such as *Jerusalem* or the *upper room*. See these locations on the "Map of Israel" and the "Map of Jerusalem" in the Appendix.
 - f. references to "when,"* such as *then, at this time*.
3. Now, apart from the human author of Acts, whose name we are not told in Acts 1, and Theophilus, to whom he's writing, you've marked the main characters mentioned in Acts 1. So what do you do with these markings besides have a lovely colored page? You want to learn what God tells you about them. So list the *main* things the text tells you about the people you marked, using the chart at the end of the lesson.

Yes, it will take time—but remember to hang on God's every word. Jesus said it is the bread by which we live (Matthew 4:4). We promise it will pay spiritual dividends if you take to heart what you learn.

4. Add the theme, the main event(s) of chapter 1 on the “Acts at a Glance” chart found in the Appendix. This chart is a great way to summarize the main points of the book. We’ll complete the chart as we move through Acts.

Now aren't you awed by all that you have observed on your own simply by observing the text! Savor the truths . . . think about them . . . talk to the Father about them. Thank Him for His Word—this, Beloved, is the truth. Truth that sanctifies you—sets you apart, makes you more like Jesus, and keeps you from the evil one (John 17:14-18). And we are just beginning!

DAY
TWO
AND
DAY
THREE

1. Now let's focus on Acts 1:1-5. At this point, the author does not identify himself by name, but it's apparent that Theophilus knows who he is.
 - a. What implies that Theophilus knows him?
 - b. Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture and since it is all God's Word, Scripture never contradicts Scripture. Theophilus is mentioned only one other place in the New Testament. Look up Luke 1:1-4 and record below what you learn from the text about him and about the connection between Luke and Acts.
 - c. So what do you learn about the writing of Acts—just from reading its first chapter? At this point, what does it seem the author is doing?
2. Tradition has established Luke not only as the author of the Gospel that bears his name but also as the author of Acts, which you can easily understand by comparing the beginnings of Luke and Acts as we did in number 1.

e. John 15:26-27

f. John 16:7-14

5. Now summarize what you learned from these Scriptures about the Holy Spirit. You can do it in bullet points.

- b. Look up Luke 22:28-30. How does this relate to the disciples asking Jesus in Acts 1:6 if He was restoring the kingdom at that time?

Now you can understand why they wanted to know, can't you?

- c. One last verse on the kingdom so you know for sure what starts Jesus' reign on earth. Read Matthew 25:31. What verse does this parallel in Acts 1?
-
9. So what happens between Jesus' ascension to heaven and His return to earth? What do you learn from Acts 1:8? Don't miss the who, the when, the where, the what—and the how.

We will take an even closer look at Acts 1:6-11 tomorrow.

DAY
FOUR

1. After you begin in prayer read through Acts 1:1-11 again. (It's good to read aloud.) Then to review, answer the following questions:
 - a. Why were they not to leave Jerusalem?
 - b. What were they going to receive?
 - c. When was this going to happen—what would be the timing?

3. Now, let's go back to Luke's final words in the Gospel he wrote for Theophilus. Read Luke 24:45-49 again and look for "power," "witnesses," and "promise." What do you see that parallels Acts 1?

4. "To the remotest part of the earth"—stop and think about this. What does this tell you about the heart of God, about salvation through genuine faith in Jesus Christ? Look up the following verses and think about them—don't just read, think, Beloved. What do they tell you about the extent of the witness?
 - a. Isaiah 49:6

 - b. Matthew 28:16-20

 - c. Revelation 5:6-10 (You may want to read to verse 14, the end of the chapter). Will the remotest part of the earth be reached? How do you know from these verses?

And what will be your role, Beloved? You will surely see as you discover the truth of Acts for yourself and go deeper with others.

- d. How significant is this with respect to the fact that Jesus is coming again? What direction did Jesus go? What received Jesus out of the apostles' sight? How will He come back and from where? So what do you learn about Jesus' departure and His coming again? Just the facts—nothing else!
- e. Compare this with Luke 21:27 and Mark 14:60-62. Are these good cross-references to Acts 1:9-11 and if so, why?
- f. Where is Jesus now . . . and what is He doing? Look up the following Scriptures and be blessed:
- 1) John 14:2-3

 - 2) Ephesians 1:20-21

 - 3) Romans 8:34

This is a good way to finish your study today, isn't it! Why don't you close your Bible and your workbook and be still for a few minutes. Think about what you've learned today . . . how it can be applied to your life . . . and then worship your God, bow before Him and honor Him with the honor due His name . . . and His Word.

DAY
FIVE

1. Jesus ascends to heaven . . . the disciples await the Spirit promised by the Father . . . and until then, what? How significant is what happens next? Enough to devote fifteen verses to it! Read Acts 1:12-26 on your Observation Worksheet.

Mark *prayer* and its synonyms in a distinctive way and add it to your bookmark. It's always good to mark references to prayer as you read the Bible as it is an important discipline. See "pray" on the back cover of your book for a suggested marking.

2. Now, when you marked the references to the apostles including the pronouns, you probably marked the *they* and *these* in verses 12-14. Let's review what we observe about them from these verses. Look at your list about them on the chart at the end of the lesson.

- a. From where to where did the apostles go?

- b. How far are these two places from each other?

- c. In an effort to obey Exodus 16:29, Jews decided that they should not walk more than 2,000 cubits (between 3,000 and 3,600 feet) on Sabbaths. Read the verse from Exodus which commands every man to remain (*yashab*: sit down, dwell, remain) in his *place* (*maqom*: country, home, open place, locality) on the seventh day. You may want to write these Hebrew words with their definitions in your Bible.

d. Let's play "Did you notice?" Did you notice that the apostles are named? That according to verse 14, none of Jesus' brothers are named among the twelve? Look up the following verses and see what you learn from them.

1) First, look at Luke 6:12-16.

2) Now read John 7:2-5.

3) Luke 8:19-21

4) Finally, did you notice there are women present in the Upper Room? If you studied Luke with us, you know Luke's Gospel says many women followed Jesus and ministered to Him and the disciples—and He ministered to women. What does this tell you about Jesus' attitude towards women?

- b. How was the selection made? Follow the process closely, listing the details and including those involved in the selection process.
- c. Does casting lots seem ungodly? Look at Proverbs 16:33. What do you learn? Who does this involve? What does this tell you about the decider of the lot?
6. Finally, according to verse 22, what was Judas's replacement to do? Were there any other references to *witness* and *resurrection* in Acts 1? If so, why don't you mark these each in a recognizable way.
7. Now you can see what commentaries say about Acts 1.

Well done! Think of what you have learned for yourself—of what you know that you know because of the time and careful attention you've given to the words of Almighty God—the Sovereign Ruler of the universe.

JESUS	THE APOSTLES
THE HOLY SPIRIT	PETER

ACTS 1

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

- THE** first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach,
- 2 until the day when He was taken up *to heaven*, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.
 - 3 To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over *a period of* forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.
 - 4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” *He said*, “you heard of from Me;
 - 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”
 - 6 So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”
 - 7 He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;
 - 8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”
 - 9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.
 - 10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.
 - 11 They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”
 - 12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away.

- 13 When they had entered *the city*, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas *the son* of James.
- 14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with *the women*, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
- 15 At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said,
- 16 “Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.
- 17 “For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry.”
- 18 (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out.
- 19 And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)
- 20 “For it is written in the book of Psalms,
 ‘LET HIS HOMESTEAD BE MADE DESOLATE,
 AND LET NO ONE DWELL IN IT’;
 and,
 ‘LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE HIS OFFICE.’
- 21 “Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—
- 22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us—one of these *must* become a witness with us of His resurrection.”
- 23 So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias.
- 24 And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen
- 25 to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”
- 26 And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

ACTS AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Segment Divisions			Chapter Themes
Author:			1
			2
Date:			3
			4
Purpose:			5
			6
Key Words:			7
			8
			9
			10
			11
			12



