

Acts

The Holy Spirit Transforms Lives

Marilyn Kunz & Catherine Schell

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Acts 1

———— “To the Ends of the Earth”

Jesus’ disciples have experienced devastating loss in his recent death, then overwhelming joy at his resurrection. As the book of Acts opens, they realize Jesus is going away again. This time the experience of separation from him begins something altogether new, and they will not be alone. As you study, imagine you are one of Jesus’ disciples participating in the events described in this chapter.

Read Acts 1:1-3 and Luke 1:1-4

1. What does Luke reveal about his sources of information and his purpose in writing these two accounts?

What do you learn about the recipient of the documents?

Note: The Gospel according to Luke and the Acts of the Apostles are volumes one and two of Luke’s account of the New Testament events.

2. From the facts listed about Jesus, how does Luke emphasize the reality of Jesus' resurrection?

Read Acts 1:4-11

3. What command and what promise does the risen Lord give his apostles (verses 4-5)?

4. With Jesus vindicated as the Messiah by his resurrection from the dead, the disciples' question in verse 6 is a natural one. Put Jesus' answer to that question into your own words.

5. What is a witness?

How are these apostles to be witnesses? See also 1:21-22.

What does it mean to be a witness to Christ today?

6. What assurance is given the disciples at Jesus' ascension?

Why the emphasis on *this Jesus* or *this same Jesus* in verse 11?

What emotions would you have felt if you had been one of the disciples?

Read Acts 1:12-26

7. What groups and how many are present at this prayer meeting?

If you had been in this group and had heard Jesus' instructions in verses 4, 5, and 8, what do you think you would be praying about? Why?

8. During these days of prayer and waiting, why does Peter raise the issue of a replacement for Judas?
9. What qualifications are required for Judas' successor?

What are the three steps involved in choosing Matthias (verses 21-26)?

Note: The normal way of settling the offices and duties in the Jewish temple was by lot. The names of the candidates were written on stones which were placed in a vessel. This was shaken and the one whose stone fell out first obtained the office.

10. Matthias, chosen to replace Judas, was a witness with the other eleven to Jesus' resurrection. If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, in what sense can you bear witness today to his resurrection?

11. How do you account for the change in the disciples' attitude now from their attitude before the resurrection?

SUMMARY

1. Who were the witnesses present at each event in this study?

In witnessing God's work in your life and those around you, how have you been changed?

2. Which of Jesus' promises in this chapter have been fulfilled and which one has not?

In what ways does the promise of Jesus' return affect the way you live day by day?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, we rejoice that you were raised from death and that you will one day return to this earth. Grant us the fullness of your Holy Spirit in our lives. You know the difficulties and opportunities we face today. Empower us to represent you wherever we are as your witnesses. For your name's sake, we pray, amen.