



Note from Pastor Kermit:

Acts is the history of how Christianity was founded and organized and solved its problems. The community of believers began by faith in the risen Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit, who enabled them to witness, to love, and to serve. The church did not start or grow by its own power or enthusiasm. The disciples were empowered by God's Holy Spirit. He was the promised Counselor and Guide sent when Jesus went to heaven.

Acts present the history of a dynamic, growing community of believers from Jerusalem to Syria, Africa, Asia, and Europe. In the first century, Christianity spread from believing Jews to non-Jews in 39 cities and 30 countries, islands, and provinces. Wow! Let's prepare to:

- ✚ Be engaged
 - Take notes, participate, commit to memorizing the verse of the week.
- ✚ Be prayerful
 - Pray that God will open up our understanding of His Word.
- ✚ Invite a friend

Holy Spirit, You are welcome here
Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere
Your glory, God, is what our hearts long for
To be overcome by Your presence, Lord
Your presence, Lord

Holy Spirit by Jesus Culture

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Lesson 1: Jesus Has Left The Scene (Acts 1:1-14)

Jesus gave His disciples the task of telling everyone about Him.

Acts 1:1-5 The Remembered Promise

1 In my first book I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit. 3 During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

4 Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, **“Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. 5 John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”**

Discussion Questions #1 & 2

- ✚ What makes it difficult to wait for the Lord to prepare us to fulfill His purposes?
- ✚ How important is it for us to be witnesses of Jesus Christ?

Acts 1:6-8 The Resurrection Proclaimed

6 So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?”

7 He replied, **“The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

Discussion Question #3

- ✚ What hinders believers from fulfilling their assignment to testify about Jesus’ presence in their lives?

Acts 1:9-14 The Return Portrayed

9 After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. 10 As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. 11 “Men of

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Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”

12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. 13 When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying.

Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the zealot), and Judas (son of James). 14 They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

Discussion Question #4 & 5

- How can believers get caught gazing when they need to be obeying the Lord? What role does witnessing play in preparing for Jesus’ return?
- What do verses 13 and 14 tell you about the people that are mentioned?

Conclusion:

Believers should follow Christ and point others to Him through the power of the Holy Spirit. In obedience and love, believers are to share the gospel with others. Believers are to live in light of Jesus’ Lordship and in anticipation of His return.

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Lesson 2: The Church is Born (Acts 2:1-4, 41-47)

Background Scripture Acts 10

The impact of the Gospel seen in the power and unity found among believers.

Acts 2:1-4 The Spirit Given

1 On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. 2 Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. 3 Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. 4 And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

Discussion Question #1

✚ What forms of evidence show that the Holy Spirit indwells a believer?

Acts 2:41-42 Devoted

41 Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.

42 All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

Discussion Question #2

✚ How does participation in these activities promote unity in the church? Can a church be unified without focusing on these elements? Explain

Acts 2:43-47 Together

43 A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. 44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. 45 They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. 46 They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— 47 all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

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Discussion Question #3&4

- ✚ What does a consistent display of sincere adoration of God and grace toward others show about what a Church believes about God
- ✚ What does Acts 2:1-4, 41-47 teach us about the relationship between church growth and church health? How do they enhance each other?

Conclusion:

Every believer is to be a witness. Believers are enabled by the Holy Spirit to fulfill their God given mission. To be spiritually healthy, believers need to be connect to other believers. In churches believers can live life together, meet one another's needs, and worship together. God's demonstration of Himself through believers can cause unbelievers to become curious about God and His Power. When placed in situations where unbelievers are asking questions, believers can seize opportunities to share Jesus.

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Lesson 3: Faithfulness in Persecution (Acts 5:25-35, 38-42)

Background Scripture Acts 5:1-24

The Holy Spirit gives us courage to proclaim the truth.

Acts 5:25-28 Returning to the Scene

25 Then someone arrived with startling news: “The men you put in jail are standing in the Temple, teaching the people!”

26 The captain went with his Temple guards and arrested the apostles, but without violence, for they were afraid the people would stone them. 27 Then they brought the apostles before the high council, where the high priest confronted them. 28 “We gave you strict orders never again to teach in this man’s name!” he said. “Instead, you have filled all Jerusalem with your teaching about him, and you want to make us responsible for his death!”

Discussion Question #1

- ✚ What motivated the religious leaders to silence the Apostles?

Acts 5:29-32 Standing Their Ground

29 But Peter and the apostles replied, “We must obey God rather than any human authority. 30 The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead after you killed him by hanging him on a cross. 31 Then God put him in the place of honor at his right hand as Prince and Savior. He did this so the people of Israel would repent of their sins and be forgiven. 32 We are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit, who is given by God to those who obey him.”

Discussion Question #2 & 3

- ✚ How would you summarize Peter’s defense?
- ✚ Do you think Peter’s speech was more convincing or convicting?

Acts 5:33-39 Waiting During Deliberations

33 When they heard this, the high council was furious and decided to kill them. 34 But one member, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, who was an expert in religious law and respected by all the people, stood up and ordered that the men be sent outside the council chamber for a while. 35 Then he said to his colleagues, “Men of Israel, take care what you are planning to do to these men! 36 Some time ago there was that fellow Theudas, who pretended to be

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someone great. About 400 others joined him, but he was killed, and all his followers went their various ways. The whole movement came to nothing. 37 After him, at the time of the census, there was Judas of Galilee. He got people to follow him, but he was killed, too, and all his followers were scattered.

38 “So my advice is, leave these men alone. Let them go. If they are planning and doing these things merely on their own, it will soon be overthrown. 39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You may even find yourselves fighting against God!”

Discussion Question #4

✚ What wisdom do you see in Gamaliel’s proposal to the counsel?

Acts 5:40-42 Rejoicing for the Opportunity

40 The others accepted his advice. They called in the apostles and had them flogged. Then they ordered them never again to speak in the name of Jesus, and they let them go.

41 The apostles left the high council rejoicing that God had counted them worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus. 42 And every day, in the Temple and from house to house, they continued to teach and preach this message: “Jesus is the Messiah.”

Discussion Question #5

✚ How can opposition to the Gospel produce courage in believers?

Conclusion:

Believer’s are to faithfully stand for Jesus when facing personal challenges. The truth of the gospel is trustworthy and can be shared with confidence. Believers can rejoice when persecuted, realizing that the gospel is proclaimed in the process.

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Lesson 4: Obedience to The Spirit (Acts 8:26-40)

Background Scripture Acts 8:1-25

Opportunities to share the Gospel comes through obedience.

Acts 8:26-29 Compelled to Seek

26 As for Philip, an angel of the Lord said to him, “Go south down the desert road that runs from Jerusalem to Gaza.” 27 So he started out, and he met the treasurer of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under the Kandake, the queen of Ethiopia. The eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and he was now returning. Seated in his carriage, he was reading aloud from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

29 The Holy Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and walk along beside the carriage.”

Discussion Question #1

- ✚ What are means the Lord uses today to direct believers in carrying out the Gospel mission?

Acts 8:30-35 Prepared to Share

30 Philip ran over and heard the man reading from the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

31 The man replied, “How can I, unless someone instructs me?” And he urged Philip to come up into the carriage and sit with him.

32 The passage of Scripture he had been reading was this:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter.

And as a lamb is silent before the shearers,
he did not open his mouth.

33 He was humiliated and received no justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth.”

34 The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, was the prophet talking about himself or someone else?” 35 So beginning with this same Scripture, Philip told him the Good News about Jesus.

Discussion Question #2 & 3

- ✚ What questions could you use today to initiate a conversation about spiritual matters with an unsaved friend?
- ✚ How did Phillip use Scripture to point to Jesus?

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Acts 8:36-39 Focused on Salvation

36 As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look! There’s some water! Why can’t I be baptized?” 38 He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.

39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away. The eunuch never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing.

Discussion Question #4

✚ How would you use the passage to explain baptism to someone?

Conclusion:

Believers must recognize opportunities to share Jesus with others as directed by the Holy Spirit. Believers gain confidence to share testimonies as they grow in their understanding of the scriptures. Salvation is available to all who are willing to receive Jesus.

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Lesson 5: Transformation Through the Gospel (Acts 9:1-9, 15-20)

Background Scripture Acts 9

God calls people to be messengers for Him.

Acts 9:1-6 The Confrontation

1 Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord's followers. So he went to the high priest. 2 He requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them—both men and women—back to Jerusalem in chains.

3 As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, **"Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?"**

5 "Who are you, lord?" Saul asked.

And the voice replied, **"I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting! 6 Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."**

Discussion Question #1

✚ How would you characterize the confrontation between Jesus and Saul?

Acts 9:7-9 The Companions

7 The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of someone's voice but saw no one! 8 Saul picked himself up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he was blind. So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus. 9 He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink.

Discussion Question #2

✚ Saul's traveling companions were prohibited from hearing Jesus message to Saul, what does this detail teach us about the way God relates to His people?

Acts 9:10-20 The Commission

10 Now there was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, **"Ananias!"**

"Yes, Lord!" he replied.

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11 The Lord said, “Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to me right now. 12 I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again.”

13 “But Lord,” exclaimed Ananias, “I’ve heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem! 14 And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name.”

15 But the Lord said, “Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel. 16 And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name’s sake.”

17 So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 Instantly something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized. 19 Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength.

Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days. 20 And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is indeed the Son of God!”

Discussion Question #3 & 4

- ✚ How important is it for a believer to be able to pinpoint the precise time of his or her conversion?
- ✚ Why was it significant that Saul immediately began to proclaim Jesus?

Conclusion:

God uses all kinds of people in kingdom work and does so in different ways. God calls specific individuals to focus on mission work. All believers can share with others who Jesus is.

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Lesson 6: Salvation is for EVERYONE! (Acts 10:1-16, 43-48)

Background Scripture Acts 10

The Gospel message is for every person of every background and life experience.

Acts 10:1-16 The Visions

In Caesarea there lived a Roman army officer named Cornelius, who was a captain of the Italian Regiment. 2 He was a devout, God-fearing man, as was everyone in his household. He gave generously to the poor and prayed regularly to God. 3 One afternoon about three o'clock, he had a vision in which he saw an angel of God coming toward him. "Cornelius!" the angel said.

4 Cornelius stared at him in terror. "What is it, sir?" he asked the angel.

And the angel replied, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have been received by God as an offering! 5 Now send some men to Joppa, and summon a man named Simon Peter. 6 He is staying with Simon, a tanner who lives near the seashore."

7 As soon as the angel was gone, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier, one of his personal attendants. 8 He told them what had happened and sent them off to Joppa.

9 The next day as Cornelius's messengers were nearing the town, Peter went up on the flat roof to pray. It was about noon, 10 and he was hungry. But while a meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 11 He saw the sky open, and something like a large sheet was let down by its four corners. 12 In the sheet were all sorts of animals, reptiles, and birds. 13 Then a voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat them."

14 "No, Lord," Peter declared. "I have never eaten anything that our Jewish laws have declared impure and unclean.[b]"

15 But the voice spoke again: "Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean." 16 The same vision was repeated three times. Then the sheet was suddenly pulled up to heaven.

Discussion Question #1 & 2

- ✚ Can you think of any other examples in Scripture when people said no to God?
- ✚ In what way could the early church have been affected if God had allowed Peter to dismiss the heavenly vision?

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Acts 10:43 The Declaration

43 He is the one all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in him will have their sins forgiven through his name.”

Discussion Question #3

- ✚ What other Bible passages can you identify that support Peter’s declaration of salvation for all who repent and believe in Jesus?

Acts 10:44-48 The Gift And The Acceptance

44 Even as Peter was saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the message. 45 The Jewish believers[e] who came with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles, too. 46 For they heard them speaking in other tongues[f] and praising God.

Then Peter asked, 47 “Can anyone object to their being baptized, now that they have received the Holy Spirit just as we did?” 48 So he gave orders for them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterward Cornelius asked him to stay with them for several days.

Discussion Question #4

- ✚ How would you describe the significance of the Gentile believers’ baptism to the Jewish believers present and to other Gentiles present?

Conclusion:

Salvation is offered to all, regardless of heritage or race. Salvation comes through faith in Jesus alone. Believers can be advocates in the local church for new believers from different backgrounds.

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