

→ AN INTRODUCTION TO ACTS

There was a man who lived with his wife on the old family farm
 For years they barely made a living.
 All the while, beneath the barren, dusty, almost worthless land was a
 rich supply of oil.

While digging a water well, the farmer discovered the OIL
 From that point on he and his wife enjoyed a life of rich blessings.
**The farmer said, 'And to think, we lived here all these years without
 knowing how rich we were!'**

I think that a lot of Christians are like that farmer.
 They go through their days, barely hanging on to their spiritual lives,
 While beneath the surface,
 The power of God is ready to break free in their lives.”

HOW DO WE APPROPRIATE THE POWER?

We can begin by digging into the WORD of God
 BUT We need to do more than READ it
 We need to receive it – it's wide and deep and high
 We need to Experience it, live by it
 and put it into practice
 take action on what it says

We are going to go digging this morning

AS we begin a series through the book of Acts

I believe it is one of the most important and relevant books of the Bible
 for the church today

It's important like Genesis
 Genesis answers the question,
"Where did I come from?",
 Acts provides US with information also
 It tells us where our future lies.

→ **Acts 1:1-3**

The first thing I want to do is lay out some groundwork for this book.
 Just FOUR facts about Acts

→ **AUTHOR:** The author was Luke
 Who was Luke?

Colossians 4:14 says LUKE was a physician

Acts 16:10 says he became a convert at Troas

Where He joined Paul and Silas and Timothy on the second
 missionary journey

He was the first missionary Doctor.

He was much more than a doctor.

He traveled with Paul for years He even went with Paul to Rome.

2 Tim. 4:11

**Only Luke is with me. Bring Mark with you when you come,
 for he will be helpful to me.**

Luke was taking notes

He recorded the works and words of Jesus

And the progress of the church.

Into a two-volume **New York Times Best Seller.**

Luke and Acts

His works makes up more of the New Testament than what any other New Testament Writer Including the apostle Paul

Luke had a purpose in all this writing



PURPOSE:

He wanted to help a man named Theophilus see the truth about **what Jesus did and taught** and how the church spread throughout the Roman world.

In Luke 1:3-4 Luke says

it seemed good to me to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus,

IN Acts 1:1 he address Theophilus again and mentions His Gospel

You may be wondering WHO this THEOPHILUS guy was?

Scholars think he was some kind of Roman official -Maybe a Benefactor or supporter.

WHY? Because Theophilus is referred to as “Most Excellent” Theophilus

Felix (Acts 23:26)

and Festus (Acts 26:25). Are referred to as “Most Excellent”

I’ll give you a second theory

God wanted us to see the truth about what Jesus taught and did and how the church spread.

Theophilus means **FRIEND OF GOD** – so we are HIS purpose for writing – to help us

THE FIRST VERSE REVEALS THE CENTRAL MESSAGE OF ACTS

Acts 1:1

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,



CENTRAL MESSAGE of Acts is the word "**BEGAN.**"

Luke says, "In my former book –

In other words in the Gospel

-- I dealt with all that Jesus **BEGAN** to do and to teach **UNTIL HIS ASCENSION**

The Gospel of Luke ends with the ascension

Luke 24:51-53

Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

It's Good News

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are Good News

The incarnation

The Death

The Burial

The Resurrection

And The ascension of Jesus **ARE GOOD NEWS**
BUT THEY ARE NOT THE END OF WHAT JESUS CAME TO DO
THEY ARE JUST THE BEGINNING

THE GOOD NEWS IS -- HE IS NOT FINISHED.

His word has been spoken
His teachings recorded
His revelation has been revealed and sealed.

He is not done with his work
He is not dead
and he is not absent.
He is alive
and he is present.

The incarnation of the Son of God into human flesh,
the once-for-all sacrifice of himself for sin on the cross,
the mighty resurrection and Ascension to the Father's right hand

is just the **BEGINNING** of what Jesus came to do and to teach.

AND THE REST OF WHAT HE CAME TO DO, HE DOES NOW IN THIS AGE

The book of Acts is not just the Acts of the Apostles,

It is the acts of the risen,
Living,
enthroned Jesus.

WHO SAID

He said in Matthew 16, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."



MAIN CHARACTER

One of the main Characters in Acts is Paul

Everything Paul did points to JESUS

Romans 15:18-19

For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient-- in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Whatever Paul accomplished for the kingdom,
IT WAS JESUS.

Jesus is alive, and he is building his church.

That is what the book of Acts is about.
And that is why it is so relevant for us today.

Jesus is still alive.
He will always be alive!
He is still speaking and working.

He is building his church,

Wherever people come under the authority of his name
And receive his forgiveness for sins
And trust his power.

There he is in the midst of them

**We have established
The Author, Purpose, Central Message, and Main Character**

I want to share A message that arises form the context of our passage

Vs. 1-3 tell us what Jesus has given us
So that we can interact with him
Be his fellow worker

There are three things mentioned



1. PURPOSE

he has given us a mission so we can be his fellow worker..

Acts 1:2

until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,

Acts 1:2

until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit. (NLT)

The original language means “**given a charge**”

Illustration:

It means to be given a responsibility

It was not a Maybe

It was not a Option

It is a Command

That CHARGE is repeated several times in scripture but is most familiar to us As Jesus Words



Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

It is recorded In John 20:21-22
after the resurrection.

Jesus said



John 20:21

..."Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, so send I you."

The Lord has given us a clear Charge
An authorized and Authentic Commission
the apostles received it And that is what is passed on to us



2. EXPERIENCE

Acts 1:3

to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

I'm going to share an obvious truth

You can't be a Christian if you do not KNOW that JESUS is alive.

There's people running around who were told they are Christian, it's their heritage, they were baptized, **but they Don't know..**

Jesus Presented Himself To the apostles

They were persuaded

- **JESUS BROKE THE POWER OF SIN and DEATH**
- **THAT HE WAS ALIVE WITH AN INDESTRUCTIBLE LIFE,**
- **THAT HE COULD NOT BE DEFEATED**
- **AND THAT HIS CAUSE WAS UNSTOPPABLE –**

Until then, the apostles were ready to go back to FISHING for a living.

But for FORTY DAYS Jesus appeared to them again and again.

THE APOSTLES WERE BEYOND DOUBT.

They had a commission

They had many convincing proofs that Jesus was alive

I'm Not an Apostle, but you know How I know Jesus is Alive

I was dead in my trespasses and sins and Jesus made me ALIVE with HIM.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

they needed more.



Jesus has given us understanding.

3. UNDERSTANDING

at the end of verse 3:

Acts 1:3

“... He appeared to them over a period of forty days and SPOKE ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD. “

The apostles had been slow to understand and believe during the ministry of Jesus

They needed a crash course in What the promises of the Old Testament really all about



Luke 24:25-27

Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.



Luke 24:45

And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

He taught them How the kingdom would show itself in the life and ministry of the church?

NOW, WE ARE NOT THE APOSTLES.

They were unique in the history.

They had unique face to face contact with the living LORD

→ **Acts 10:41**

He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen--by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

They had unique inspiration and authority as the foundation of the church

→

Ephes. 2:20

built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

But that doesn't mean we don't need what they had.

We need

PURPOSE

EXPERIENCE

UNDERSTANDING

There is one last thing we need that they received.

An enduement with Power from on high...

It's called the Baptism in the Holy Ghost

Which I will display to you next Sunday Morning

→

My prayer is that in this series of messages on the book of Acts Jesus himself will speak and act and give us just what we need to be all that he has called us to be..