

BIBLE STUDY – ACTS Introduction and Chapter 1

The book of Acts provides a bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles that follow. It is the second volume to Luke's Gospel. Besides linking the Gospel narratives on the one hand and the apostolic letters on the other, it supplies an account of the life of Paul from which we can learn the setting for his letters. Geographically its story spans the lands between Jerusalem, where the church began, and Rome, the political center of the empire. Historically it recounts the first 30 years of the church. It is also a bridge that ties the church in its beginning with each succeeding age. This book may be studied to gain an understanding of the principles that ought to govern the church of any age.

There is a thread that runs through the entire book. That thread is the power of God's Word in the lives of His people. In this study we will want to explore each example of God's powerful Word Sacraments and then be:

1. Comforted by it and
2. Empowered by it for our daily life.

Read Acts 1:1-11.

1. How does what Luke writes in verses 1-3 give comfort to the disciples and to Christians of all ages?
2. In verse 4 it is said "he was eating with them." He was having table fellowship with his disciples. Table fellowship simply means the eating of a meal together and the fellowship among the participants that such a meal entailed in ancient Near Eastern culture. Throughout the various peoples and cultures in ancient Near East, table fellowship signified a high level of friendship and unity. To invite a guest to a meal was a universally understood act of hospitality. In the East, even today, to invite a man to a meal is an honor. It was an offer of peace, trust, brotherhood, and forgiveness; in short, sharing a table meant sharing life. When does this happen in our lives?
3. What is Jesus saying in verse 5? How has that happened in our lives? How can it be a daily comfort for us?
4. When the disciples asked Jesus a question in verse 6 they were looking for the deliverance of the people of Israel from foreign domination and for the establishment of an earthly kingdom. The reference to the coming of the Spirit had caused them to wonder if the new age was about to dawn. They and their fellow Jews were stuck in a mindset of what they wanted the Savior to be and do. The Jews today are stilling looking for a savior who will come to conquer their enemies. What is the problem with this?
5. What is the comfort in verses 7-8? How has verse 8 been fulfilled? What part do we play in that today? What is a good way to do this?
6. Read verses 9-11. What can we learn from these verses? What is the comfort for us?

Read Acts 1:12-26

7. What learnings can we take from verses 12-14?
8. Read John 7:5 and Acts 1:14. What do you think changed Jesus brother's minds about how they felt about Him?
9. In verse 15 Peter as usual represented the disciples. His words and the believers' subsequent actions show that a major change has taken place in Jesus' followers. What do you suppose made the difference?
10. What was Peter's purpose in addressing his fellow believers (v.16)?
11. What did Peter rely on to guide the action he proposed? (See vv. 20 and 24)
12. What qualifications were required to fill Judas' place (v. 22)?
13. All the offices and duties to be performed in the OT temple were chosen by lot. Names of candidates were written on stones which were put into vessel, which was then shaken. The name on the first stone to fall out of the vessel was elected. What is said in verse 24 that leaves the decision in God's hands?
14. What verse in this section was most meaningful to you?

