

WHAT THE BIBLE Is ABOUT

Theology underpinning the book of Acts

While Acts is written as straightforward history, understanding some theology can be useful.

1. Key subjects in Acts include **God, Jesus, and Holy Spirit**.
2. Salvation is available to **everyone** (Jews and Gentiles).
3. Jews (OT) and Followers of Jesus' Way (NT) have **separate identities and futures**, but are both included in God's Plan.
4. The **ekklesia** (aka "church") is the **Body of Believers**, not a religion, denomination or building.
5. **Revelations** regarding the "mystical church" of Christ:
 - a. Jesus Christ created the church. He is its **origin**.
 - b. The church is one with Jesus Christ. He is its **nature**.
 - c. The function of the church is to be the **instrument** of Jesus:
 - To impart **life** where there is death
 - To manifest **light** where there is darkness
 - To produce **love** where there is apathy, bitterness and hatred.
6. **Enemies/antagonists** of the *ekklesia*:
 - a. **Prejudice** (prejudging, no confidence, playing "church").
 - b. **Personal agendas** (desire for other than God's will).
 - c. **Pride** (lack of obedience to the Holy Spirit).
7. **Lessons** for the corporate *ekklesia* (Body of Christ):
 - a. The church's **passion** must be the glory of God.
 - b. The church's **governing principle** must be loyalty to Christ.
 - c. The church's **power** must be the Holy Spirit.
8. **Challenges for Believers** arising from the book of Acts:
 - a. What is your **motivation**? Why be a Follower?
 - b. What is your **method**? How does one follow Jesus?
 - c. What is your emphasis? Why do you follow Him?

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9. Baptism with the Spirit:

- a. **Baptism with the Spirit** of Jesus began **Jesus' earthly ministry** (Luke 3:21-22).
- b. **Baptism with the Spirit** of disciples began **Jesus' heavenly ministry** (Acts 2:1-4).

10. Sign gifts: speaking with tongues (unlearned languages), healing, etc:

- a. Charismatics see sign gifts as primarily edification.
- b. Non-charismatics see sign gifts as a means of authenticating revelation.

In Acts, the focus is on speaking in unlearned languages:

Acts	Speakers	Audience	Relative to conversion	Purpose
2:1-4	Jewish believers	Unsaved Jews and Christians	Sometime afterwards	To validate (for Jews) God's working as Joel prophesied
10:44-47	Gentile believers	Jewish believers who doubted God's plan	Immediately afterwards	To validate (for Jews) God's working among Gentiles
19:1-7	Believers	Confirmation to Jews of Paul's message	Immediately afterwards	To validate (for Jews) Paul's gospel message

11. And Peter said to them, **repent**, and be **baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)

REPENT

Change of mind and heart

(Hebrew word means to turn around, as in from your back to Jesus to facing Jesus)

or

Change of conduct*

BAPTISE

Spirit baptism

(This is solely God's prerogative.)

or

Water baptism:

- Is water baptism a **requirement****
- OR an **expression of faith*****

Notes:

- * Turning from sinful practices (personal reform) is *works*, **not faith**. True faith brings real repentance, which leads to appropriate changes in conduct.
- ** If Baptism is required for salvation, salvation is of *works*, **not faith**. Over 100 New Testament verses make faith in Christ the **only** condition for justification.
- *** New Testament apostles simply seemed to take for granted that all who trusted in Christ would then submit to water baptism.

Outline of the book of Acts

THE MINISTRY OF PETER (Chapters 1-12)

- Peter and the Jews, Acts 1—7
- Peter and the Samaritans, Acts 8
- The conversion of Paul, Acts 9
- Peter and the Gentiles, Acts 10—11
- Peter’s arrest and deliverance, Acts 12

THE MINISTRY OF PAUL (Chapter 13-28)

- Paul’s first missionary journey, Acts 13—14
- The Council of Jerusalem, Acts 15
- Paul’s second missionary journey, 16:1—18:22
- Paul’s third missionary journey, 18:23—21:25
- Paul’s arrest and trial in Caesarea, 21:26—26:31
- Paul’s voyage to Rome, Acts 27-28

Detailed Outline

I.	The witness in Jerusalem	1:1—6:7
	A. The founding of the church	1:1—2:47
	1. The presumptive preface to the book	1:1-5
	2. The command to witness	1:6-8
	3. The ascension of Jesus	1:9-11
	4. Jesus' appointment of a twelfth apostle	1:12-26
	5. The birth of the church	2:1-41
	6. The early state of the church	2:42-47
	B. The expansion of the church in Jerusalem	3:1—6:7
	1. External opposition	3:1—4:31
	2. Internal compromise	4:32—5:11
	3. Intensified external opposition	5:12-42
	4. Internal conflict	6:1-7
II.	The witness in Judea and Samaria	6:8—9:31
	A. The martyrdom of Stephen	6:8—8:1a
	1. Stephen's arrest	6:8—7:1
	2. Stephen's address	7:2-53
	3. Stephen's death	7:54—8:1a

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B.	The ministry of Philip	8:1b-40
1.	The evangelization of Samaria	8:1b-25
2.	Philip's ministry to the Ethiopian eunuch	8:26-40
C.	The mission of Saul	9:1-31
1.	Saul's conversion and calling	9:1-19a
2.	Saul's initial conflicts	9:19b-30
3.	The church at peace	9:31
III.	The witness to the uttermost part of the earth	9:32—28:31
A.	The extension of the church to Syrian Antioch	9:32—12:24
1.	Peter's ministry in Lydda and Joppa	9:32-43
2.	The conversion of Cornelius	10:1—11:18
3.	The initiatives of the Antioch church	11:19-30
4.	The persecution of the Jerusalem church	12:1-24
B.	The extension of the church to Cyprus and Asia Minor	12:25—16:5
1.	The divine appointment of Barnabas and Saul	12:25—13:3
2.	The mission to Cyprus	13:4-12
3.	The mission to Asia Minor	13:13—14:21a
4.	Paul and Barnabas' return to Antioch of Syria	14:21b-28
5.	The Jerusalem Council	15:1-35
6.	The strengthening of the Gentile churches	15:36—16:5
C.	The extension of the church to the Aegean shores	16:6—19:20
1.	The call to Macedonia	16:6-10
2.	The ministry in Macedonia	16:11—17:15
3.	The ministry in Achaia	17:16—18:17
4.	The beginning of ministry in Asia	18:18-22
5.	The results of ministry in Asia	18:23—19:20
D.	The extension of the church to Rome	19:21—28:31
1.	Ministry on the way to Jerusalem	19:21—21:16
2.	Ministry in Jerusalem	21:17—23:32
3.	Ministry in Caesarea	23:33—26:32
4.	Ministry on the way to Rome	27:1—28:15
5.	Ministry in Rome	28:16-31