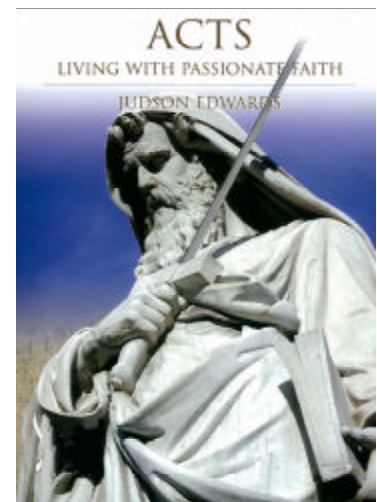


January Bible Study

The Book of Acts


Living With Passionate Faith

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Acts Introduction

- Gathering a Community – Acts 1-5
 - Breaking Down Walls – Acts 6-15
 - Spreading the Word – Acts 16-20
 - Taking a Stand – Acts 21-28
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Questions for Thought

- ❑ What did it mean to restore the Kingdom?
 - ❑ What are your thoughts on witnessing?
 - ❑ Who witnessed to you, and you came to faith?
 - ❑ How are these four levels of witness for us?
 - ❑ What expectation does the church today have?
 - ❑ What are your thoughts on the casting of lots?
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Acts 1:1-5

□ Preliminaries

- The Author – Luke.
- The Recipient – Theophilus.
- Eyewitnesses to His resurrection.
- The Kingdom of God.
- Waiting for the Holy Spirit.
- Baptism of John / Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:6-11

- Ascension of Jesus.
- Kingdom and consummation.
- The Great Commission and outline of Acts.
- Reception of power.
- Men in white clothing.
- A new Christian hope.

Acts 1:12-14

- The Mount of Olives – Zechariah 14:4.
- A list of disciples.
 - Three other locations – Matt 10, Mark 3, Luke 6.
 - Peter and John together – Acts 3:1 and 8:14.
 - James' death – Acts 12:2.
- The family of Jesus.
 - Women in this new community.
 - Luke's concern – Luke 8:2, 23:49, 55, 24:10

Acts 1:15-26

- Peter speaks to the community of witnesses.
- Judas fulfilling prophecy – Ps 41:9, 109:8.
- Replacing Judas, but not James (12:2)?
- Requirements for a replacement.
- Casting lots – not too uncommon – Lev 16:8, Num 26:55-56, 33:54, Joshua 19:1-40, First Chronicles 26:12-16, Micah 2:5, Jonah 1:7-8

Questions for Thought

- ❑ Let's retell the Pentecost story from memory.
- ❑ How do the tongues here compare to tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:1-18?
- ❑ How do you relate these miraculous events to your own experience?
- ❑ How do you explain the sound, the sight, and the speaking?
- ❑ Have you ever longed for miracles like this?

Acts 2:1-13

- Pentecost – 50th day after Passover.
- Sound and sight – temporary effects.
- Speaking with other tongues – 2:4.
- Hearing in their own language – 2:8.
- Not normative for Christians – it is as unrepeatable as the birth of Christ or His death and resurrection.

Acts 2:1-13

- Faith based on miracles? Quote on p. 25.
- Christian significance of Pentecost.
 - Birthday of the Church – Holy Spirit taking up residence in the believer, (being filled).
 - Giving of the Spirit may be parallel to God giving the Law at Mount Sinai.
 - Hearing the Word of God in their own language: like a reversal of Babel – Gen 11:8-9.

Acts 2:14-36

- Peter's sermon – kerygma.
- Peter uses Scripture for the Jewish audience.
- Hope of Messiah is challenged by the Suffering Servant, the Crucified One.
- Jesus' miracles – 2:22 – general information.
- Abandonment in the grave?
- Fulfillment of Scripture is central to kerygma.

Acts 2:37-47

- What shall we do? Kerygmatic preaching always closes with a call for repentance.
- Baptism necessary for forgiveness? – 2:38.
 - The emphasis is on repentance and forgiveness.
 - Another indicates repentance only – Acts 3:19.
 - Gift of the Spirit is not bound by a physical act.
- Election? The gospel is open to all – 2:39.
- Characteristics of the community – Sunday!

Questions for Thought

- ❑ When you read about the first Christian community, what emotions do you feel?
- ❑ Do you think the modern church has these six characteristics of the first church?
- ❑ In what ways has our culture so stressed the personal dimension of faith that it has neglected the communal dimension?

Acts 3:1-10

- ❑ Lameness heightened by the physician – 3:2.
- ❑ Lame man received a disappointing word, but got something far greater.
- ❑ Words accompanied by touch – 3:7, Isa 35:6.
- ❑ So many people are witnesses to the healing, which adds authenticity to the miracle.

Acts 3:11-26

- God's power - Exodus 3:6, 15; Isaiah 52:13.
- No longer pointing fingers – 3:17.
 - Jewish ignorance.
 - A Theme revisited in 13:27 and 17:30.
- Prophecy is central to kerygma– 3:18, and Peter moves in to repentance.
- Not for the Jews only, but gentiles, too: 2:38; 5:31; 11:18, 21; 14:15; 17:30; 20:21; 28:27.

Acts 3:11-26

- Peter likens Jesus to the prophet Moses – 3:22.
 - Deuteronomy 18:15, 18.
 - If one does not listen, he will be cut off...
- All the prophets have pointed toward this hope of the true Israel.

Acts 4:1-22

- Temple officials and Sadducees – 4:2, 23:8.
- People coming to faith – 4:3.
 - Jerusalem population at this time, 25-30K.
 - If 5000, it means 1/5 of Jerusalem!
- The Sanhedrin – 4:5-6.
 - Great authority and position.
 - These great men against to common men.
 - Peter speaks – filled with the Spirit – 4:8.

Acts 4:1-22

- The Spirit give strength and courage.
 - Luke 12:11-12 finds fulfillment.
 - The officials are stunned!
 - The man was healed.
 - The wisdom of Peter.
 - Just don't speak in Jesus' name – 4:18.
 - We cannot keep silent – 4:20.

Questions for Thought

- ❑ What is the evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit? How can you tell?
- ❑ What would you say is the secret of Peter's and John's success?
- ❑ Since these were uneducated and untrained men, what do we have seminaries? How important is education?
- ❑ Tell me about a person or church that you know astonished the world.

Acts 4:23-31

- People praying:
 - Persecution and predestination – the key 4:29.
 - The place trembles; prayer heard.
 - Perhaps a parallel event to Acts 2?
- The Church is:
 - Filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - Bold in their witness.

Questions for Thought

- ❑ When are Christians not to obey authorities?
(Romans 13:1-5)
- ❑ What are some ways that you would not like to be like the early church?
- ❑ What made the early believers so tenacious and resilient?
- ❑ When have you suffered for your faith?
- ❑ Looking ahead, how do you explain the strange story of Ananias and Sapphira?

Acts 4:32-5:11

- These two stories provide contrast, interrupting the flow of the Peter narrative.
 - Sharing all things in common.
 - Fulfillment of Deuteronomy 15:4.
 - A community focused on the least, last and the lost.
 - Ananias and Sapphira.
 - Resembles the sin of Achan – Joshua 7.
 - Peter speaks: Why? And reveals the source of evil.
 - Told in straightforward manner, without pity.

Acts 4:32-5:11

- Ananias and Sapphira.
 - Luke does not say that God struck them down.
 - Community life needed to be protected.
 - Luke was not afraid to show the early Church warts and all; real people just like us.
 - Filled Christians exercising discernment.

Acts 5:12-16

- Story resumes from 4:31.
- Miracles by apostles, not just Peter and John.
 - Peter's shadow story did not concern Luke.
 - People expected the miraculous – like 19:12.

Acts 5:17-42

- The theme of resiliency.
 - Preach, arrest, threats, prayer/praise, escape.
 - Peter and John – 5:17-19.
 - Peter – 12:6-11.
 - Paul and Silas – 16:26-34.
 - The punching bag toy, pops back up.
 - Set free to speak to the people – 5:19-20.
 - No questions of how they got out of jail!

Acts 5:17-42

- Peter's response – 5:29-32.
 - Crucifixion of the tree – Deut 21:22-23, Acts 10:39, Gal 3:13.
 - Repentance and remission of sins.
- Cut to the quick! – 5:33.
 - Gamaliel – if bogus, the movement will fail, because it is based on human effort.
 - Flogged and considered worthy to suffer.



Acts 5:17-42

- The section ends with more community!
 - Everyday activities, teaching and preaching:
 - In the Temple.
 - From house to house.
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