

Walk Through the Bible

Pastor Paul Cannings

Acts – Part 1

I. Introduction

Where Luke concluded the Gospel of Luke he continues in Acts 1:8. He writes to an associate name Theophilus to tell him all he knew about the life of Christ (in the Gospel of Luke – Acts 1:1) and the life of the New Testament church (Acts).

Acts traces the rapid expansion of the gospel in the world. Each section of the book, 1-7, 8-12, 13-28, focuses in on a significant phase of the expansion of this gospel. The book also communicates the rapid growth of the church, the popular favor that they enjoyed (2:47), and the genuineness of the miracles performed (4:15-16).

II. Author

- A. The author was acquainted with Paul in that he traveled with the apostle in 16:10-17, 20:5-21:8, 27:1-28:16. The words "we" and "us" are used in these sections. There is an intimate knowledge and detail in these sections.
1. Luke is associated with Paul in Col 4:14 and Phlmn 24.
 2. Luke seems to be a physician and therefore acquainted with medical terms, 1:3, 3:7, 9:18, 13:11, 28:1-10.

VI. An Exposition of the Book of Acts

- A. 1:1-6:8, The Gospel in Jerusalem:
1. The HS is the key member of the Godhead in the book of Acts beginning in Acts 2.
 2. The question in 1:6, about the restoration of the kingdom is related to their understanding of the coming of the Holy Spirit (John 14-16).
 3. 1:9-11-- marks the conclusion of Jesus' personal, visible ministry on earth and the beginning of the ministry of the church, on earth.
 4. The choice of Matthias follows the apostles' praying and the drawing of lots. This is the last time lots are used to determine God's will in the New Testament. The question of whether Paul should have been the 12th apostle is a moot one, Rom 8:28.
- B. 2:1-13, the beginning of the church age:
1. It occurred on the Day of Pentecost which was the 50th day after the feast of First fruits, Lev 23:16.
 2. The sound of the wind and the appearance of fire, are audible and visible demonstrations by God of the new dispensation of the church.

3. The filling of the HS - is separate from the baptism of the HS.

- a) The Baptism occurs once for each believer at the moment of salvation, 11:15-16, Rom 6:3, I Cor 12:13, Col 2:12. The filling occurs many times after a believer's salvation, Acts 4:8, 31, 6:3, 5, 7:55, 9:17, 52. Here, Acts 1:5, 11:16, the baptism of the HS on the Day of Pentecost refers to the initial inauguration of the church age.
- b) The filling of the Holy Spirit took place at significant times in Acts:
 - i. Pentecost (2:1-4) – the beginning of the church age.
 - ii. When Philip preached among the Samaritans (8:17).
 - iii. Peter went to the house of Cornelius (10:44-46).
 - iv. When John the Baptist disciples came to Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:6)

C. 2:12-40 Peter's discourse: is a rebuttal against drunkenness. He states that the HS has now come into the lives of the 120.

1. The resurrection of the Lord is also a main point. It is contrast to David who is still buried.

D. Peter quotes Joel 2:28-32 which has a two-part fulfillment (HS + 2nd Advent.). What took place on the day of Pentecost was a partial fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28-29 for the following reasons:

E. 2:41-47, the description of the first church.

1. Note the 4 activities of the church.
2. Note the growth and favor of the early church.
3. Although these are the basic founding elements for the early church, they do not provide the sum total for all the NT church's activities.
4. NOTE, that people were daily being saved. The church grew rapidly.

F. 3:1-6:7, THE EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH:

1. The early church first met as a group in and around the temple in Jerusalem. They also met in groups in homes, Acts 2:46, Rom 16:5.
2. The healing of the crippled man helped with the expansion. He attributes the power to the healing to the same Jesus, whom the Jews crucified and who was later resurrected.
3. 3:19-21, "restore" is anticipation of the coming Kingdom, Acts 1:6, Mt 17:11.

G. Chapter 4, the internment and release of Peter and John:

1. In vv 1, the principal accusers were the Sanhedrin.
2. Note how leaders of the early church were jailed, but the Word of God was not bound, Acts 28:30-31, Phil 1:12-14.
3. In vv 13, it is noted that the apostles were illiterate men, but had been with Jesus, John 7:15.
4. 4:23-31 - the release, is used to introduce Barnabus, this shows the contrast of the early church generosity with the greed of Annias and Sapphira, chap 5.

- H. Acts 5:1-11 -- The Deceit of Ananias and Sapphira – The establishing of the authority of the NT Church:
1. The key point is that this is the first church discipline, I Cor 5:1, Matt 18:15-20.
 2. In vv 3, "Satan has filled your heart," is the idea of control, Eph 5:18, through a lack of I John 1:9.
 3. Lying to the Holy Spirit was the same thing as lying to God, vv 3, 4.
 4. The "sin unto death," I John 5:16, I Cor 11:30.
- I. Acts 5:12-42, The progress of the church:
1. After the leaders have been tested.
 2. After the work of the Holy Spirit.
 3. After church discipline.
 - a) Note 5:12-16, the church grew, 2:41, 47, 4:4, 6:1, 7, 9:31.
 - b) In vv 17f, the church is persecuted.
 - c) In vv 29, Peter states a basic principle of 4:19-20. Christians are to obey government, unless it is a sin to do so, Rom 13:1-7, I Peter 2:13-17.
 - d) Peter's message is basically the same, in 2:23, 3:15, and 4:16.
 - e) Gamaliel's point is that Christianity will soon die out.
- J. Acts 6:1-7, the need for Administration of the Church.
1. The choosing of the 7 solved a problem between two groups in the early church, food distribution to the widows and who were served first.
 2. The primary goal was for the apostles to continue the ministry of teaching. It is not that they are above waiting on tables (John 13).
 3. The passage is used to introduce Stephen and Philip.
 4. 6:7 contains another progress report in Acts.
- K. Acts 6:8-9:31 -- The Witness in all Judea and in Samaria:
1. 6:8-8:1a, the martyrdom of Stephen.
 - a) In 6:8-7:1, He is arrested.
 - b) This is the 3rd of 4 times believers in Acts have stood before a Jewish court (4:15, 5:27, and 22:30).
 2. 7:2-53, His message. Note three ideas in his message:
 - a) The progress and change in God's program, from Abraham to the building of a tabernacle.
 - b) God's blessings are not limited to Israel in the Promised Land and the temple.
 - c) Israel's has always opposed God, so they are just like your fathers.
 3. The attack upon Stephen (7:54-60).