



SERIES: MAY- JULY: THE MAIN THING

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Tuesday, 6/21/2022

Scripture: Acts

TITLE: Acts – Church History

What's your story? Have you ever been asked that? That could be a long story if traced back far enough. We all have a story. We have a story of how we got to this point in our lives. We also have a story that can be traced back through our ancestry. But we also have a greater story as the people of God. Do you know that story? If not, then you should study the book of Acts.

The book of Acts was written by the physician Luke. He wrote the Gospel of Luke. We can be sure of this because he begins the book by writing in Acts 1:1-2 (CSB), "I wrote the first narrative, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up, after he had given instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen." You may remember that Luke wrote his Gospel to educate Theophilus.

If you ever wondered how the church began and what happened between the resurrection and the early church, this is the book for you. It is the outline for the rest of the New Testament. As you read through the New Testament, you can turn back to the book of Acts and see its history.

Each section of Acts covers the history of the early church by looking at different topics, places, and apostles. For example, In chapter 1, we see Jesus' commission and ascension. Then in chapters 1-8, we follow Peter addressing the Jews in Jerusalem. In chapters 8-12, we follow Phillip and the Samaritans in Judea and Samaria. Then in chapters 13-28, we follow Paul addressing the Gentiles at the ends of the earth. In 28 chapters, Luke will cover 29 years of the early church.

One of the most important pieces is the conversion of the cynic and skeptic Saul. Saul hated the church. He wanted to destroy the message of Christ, but something changed. He encountered a risen Christ. Paul is one of the greatest apologetics for Christianity today.

So what's the main thing from the book of Acts? It's church history. In 28 chapters, we see the power of the church, the progress of the church, the expansion of the church, Paul's three missionary journeys, and Paul's three trials.

Jesus said in Acts 1:8-9,

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. After he had said this, he was taken up as they were watching, and a cloud took him out of their sight."

And then we find this model and growth of the early church. Luke writes in Acts 2:42-47,

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”

Friend, this is our story as God’s children. This is our heritage. This is our story, motivation, and charge today.

God doesn’t need us but invites us into the story to continue his mission of building the family of God. I want to do my part. Will you join me? If so, let’s begin today.