

# **The Book of Acts: The Story of Us**

# The Acts of the Apostles

- **Written by Luke around 60 A.D. to Theophilos, as the second part of Luke's Gospel.**
- **Purpose: "So that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught" (Luke 1:4).**
- **Outline: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

# Outline of Acts:

- **Chapters 1-2: “when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.”**
- **Chapters 3-7: “Witnesses in Jerusalem”**
- **Chapters 8-12: “in all Judea and Samaria”**
- **Chapters 13-28: “to the ends of the earth”**

# **The Prophetic Voice**

**Acts 2:15-18**

## **Acts 2:15-18**

**For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.”**

**An Englishman wrote to a newspaper:**

**“It seems ministers feel their sermons are very important and spend a great deal of time preparing them. I have been attending church quite regularly for 30 years and I have probably heard 3,000 of them. To my consternation, I discovered I cannot remember a single sermon. I wonder if a minister’s time might be more profitable spent on something else.”**

**After many more letters in response,  
someone wrote:**

**“I have been married for 30 years. During that time I have eaten 32,850 meals—mostly my wife’s cooking. Suddenly I have discovered I cannot remember the menu of a single meal. And yet, I have the distinct impression that without them, I would have starved to death long ago. I received nourishment from every single meal.”**

# **What happens when the Holy Spirit comes upon the church?**

- **“Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47).**
- **“Clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49).**
- **The presence of the Spirit in the church empowers the witness and voice of the church.**



# The Church Age

- From Pentecost to Christ's Return
- Age of the Spirit
- Age of Grace
- Age of Witness and Proclamation
- Age of an empowered, Spirit-indwelt people
- "The Last Days" (Acts 2:17)

# What is the Prophetic Voice of God?

- **A Biblical Voice**
- **A Christ-Centered Voice**
- **A Gracious Voice**
- **A Unifying Voice**

# 1. A Biblical Voice

- **The Sermons of the apostles were biblical sermons.**
- **Peter's sermon consists of 568 words, and 218 of them were quotations from the Old Testament: 38%!**
- **“For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:21)**

# Quotation from Matthew Henry

**“Though Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues as the Spirit gave him utterance, yet he did not think to set aside the Scriptures. Christ's scholars never learn above their Bible; and the Spirit is given, not to do away with the Scriptures, but to enable us to understand, approve, and obey them.”**

# Christ said:

- **“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Matt. 5:17).**
- **“Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, ‘Thus it is written...’ (Luke 24:45-46)**

## **2. A Christ-Centered Voice**

- **They preached Christ Jesus.**
- **He was the main point: His life, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, His return, His indwelling.**
- **They were specific that “this same Jesus” of Nazareth who was crucified, rose, and will return, is the Christ of God.**
- **Acts 1:11; 2:22-24; 2:32; 2:36.**

# Paul wrote:

- **“For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2).**
- **“For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:5-6).**

# **3. A Gracious Voice**

- The sermons offered the grace of God.**
- Preaching in the New Testament sense is to present the grace of God in a practical and meaningful way for the hearers, to call them to repentance and faith, and to show how Christ's death covered their sins.**
- Conviction of sin is always specific – a specific known sin.**



# **In his sermon Peter said:**

- **“And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Acts 2:19-21).**

# Joel's Prophecy

- **Who, when, where, why about Peter's Sermon?**
- **Joel called Israel to repentance and to faith**
- **Warned them of coming disaster**
- **Foretold of a new day of the Spirit and faith**
- **Especially relevant to Israel in First Century: they had rejected Christ, in 70 A.D. Rome would destroy Jerusalem.**

# **Peter presented God's grace**

**Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 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. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation."**

# Our Needs Today of Grace

- **Marriages failing**
- **Families breaking up and children forgotten**
- **Sexual exploitation**
- **Compassionate acts more and more given to the state to perform and the Christian heart is becoming increasingly hardened.**
- **Stingy, narcissistic, self-focused, selfish**
- **“Forgive them for they know not what they do.”**

## **4. A Unifying Voice**

- **The prophetic voice of God that is biblical, Christ-centered, gracious and relevant, brings the church of Jesus Christ together.**

# Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 1834-92

- 1854, 19 years of age pastored New Park Street Chapel in London.
- 1861, became the Metropolitan Tabernacle, seated 5,000.
- His preaching was a biblical, plain-spoken and direct appeal to the people.

