

Invitation Materials

Author:

1 This work, like the Gospel of Luke, is anonymous. However, because of the “we” passages (e.g. 16:10-17), it seems likely that the author is Luke the physician who accompanied Paul on some of his journeys.

Date:

The final events recorded here took place in early A.D. 60, so Acts must have been compiled some time after that.

Theme:

The spread of the Gospel to all the known world (1:8)

Historical Background:

- 1 In 30 short years, the church grew from what was considered an insignificant Jewish sect to a major force in the Roman Empire.
- 2 Luke wrote it as a companion piece to his Gospel to show how Christianity was not a political threat to Rome, but rather the work of God’s Spirit in building up a spiritual “kingdom”, one comprised of all who live by faith in Jesus.
- 3 Luke focuses on two leading figures in the church: Peter, the apostle to the Jews (ch. 1-12), and Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (ch. 13-28).

Characteristics

- 1 The theme of Acts is defined in 1:8.
- 2 Luke records the growth of the church in Jerusalem and Judea (1:1-6:7), Galilee and Samaria (6:8-9:31), Antioch, which became a missionary launching pad to the Gentile world (9:32-12:24), Asia (11:25-16:5), Europe (16:6-19:20), and Rome (19:21-28:31).
- 3 Luke centers in on Paul, to affirm Paul’s authority as an apostle, as well as his innocence of the charges brought against him.
- 4 Acts provides information about the churches Paul founded and to whom he wrote his epistles.

Outline

1:1-2:47	The Message
3:1-5:42	The Opposition
6:1-8:1a	Martyrdom
8:1b-9:31	Paul’s Conversion
9:32-11:18	Cornelius
11:19-12:25	Miraculous Escape
13:1-14:28	Paul’s Gospel
15:1-15:35	Controversy
15:36-18:22	In Prison
18:23-21:16	Paul’s Mission
21:17-23:35	Paul’s Trial
24:1-26:32	Paul’s Trial
27:1-28:31	At Rome

Discussion Questions

Open

- 1 What is your attitude toward history? "Those who refuse to learn from the past are condemned to repeat it!" or "History is boring?"

Dig

- 1 2:46-47; 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:28. What happens in the sections which these verses conclude? How do these summary statements relate to the theme of Acts found in 1:8?
- 2 Paul's three missionary journeys. (13:4-14:28; 15:36-18:22; 18:23-20:38)

Reflect

- 1 Acts records 30 years of a movement that swept the Roman empire. How would you describe your own church life?

Invitation materials and discussion questions are taken from Serendipity Bible