

The Acts of the Apostles

St. Pope Paul VI: “Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize.”

St. John Paul II: “We must rekindle in ourselves the impetus of the beginnings and allow ourselves to be filled with the ardor of the apostolic preaching which followed Pentecost. We must revive in ourselves the burning conviction of Paul, who cried out: ‘Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel’ (1 Cor 9:16).”

The story in outline:

- Luke, companion of Paul and author of Luke-Acts
- Audience: “...most excellent *Theophilus*...”
- Commission and Empowerment of the Disciples (“You will be clothed with Power from on high...”)
 - Pentecost(s)
- The Word of God in Jerusalem (Community, Prayer, Eucharist, Evangelizing, persecutions)
- The Word of God in Judea and Samaria
- The Word of God to the Ends of the Earth
- Paul’s Conversion and Missionary Journeys
- Council of Jerusalem
- Paul’s Trials:
 - Arrival in Rome, House Arrest and Testimony (28:1–31)
- Open Ending of Acts in Rome (28:30–31): “[Paul] remained for two full years in his lodgings. He received all who came to him, and with complete assurance and without hindrance he proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles: **Part One and Two of the Deeds and Teachings of King Jesus**

- Luke 1: 1-4
- Luke 24: Resurrection Accounts
 - “Two Men” see Luke 9:28-31
- 24:11: “But they did not believe the women...”
- Luke 24:13-35--the Road to Emmaus
 - Leaving Jerusalem
 - Opened the Scriptures to them
 - Hearts Burning!
 - Breaking of the Bread
- **Scriptures** and **Eucharist**
- Luke 24:36-39-- not a ghost, not a resuscitated corpse, but alive and powerful.
 - **Eats** with them and then opens the **Scriptures** to them.
- Acts 1:4-5 : *eating, wait for the gift, baptized with the Holy Spirit*
- Acts 1:6 - restore the Kingdom to Israel?
 - They are referencing Daniel 7: 13-14 (Jesus, the Son of Man Luke 22:69)
 - Jesus’ response: “you will receive power...and a cloud took him from their site.”
 - 1:10: two men (!) dressed in white garments...

For next week: Read Luke 24, Acts 1 and 2

Small Group discussion Questions: (done over Zoom)

1. **Introductions: why did you decide to study Acts with this group?**
2. **Do you relate to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, sad and disappointed?**
3. **Think of a time when you were eager to get started with something, and you had to wait. What was the value of waiting?**
4. **What is one gift that you would like to receive from the Holy Spirit during this Easter Season?**
5. **Prayer intentions and end.**