

ACTS

I. INTRODUCTION¹

Author

Although the Book of Acts, like the Third Gospel, nowhere mentions the author by name, it does not present itself as an anonymous work.² In the prologue of both works the author refers to himself by the first-person pronoun, and it is obvious that Theophilus knew the writer's identity (Luke 1:4; Acts 1:1). Again, like the Third Gospel, the Book of Acts also possesses both the external and internal evidences for the Lucan authorship. **Externally**, Luke's authorship of this book is supported by *the Anti-Marcionite Prologue* to Luke (c. A.D. 150-180), the fragmentary *Muratorian Canon* (c. A.D. 160-200), Irenaeus in *Against Heresies* (A.D. 185), Clement of Alexandria (c. A.D. 155-215) in *Stromata*, Tertullian (c. A.D. 150-220) in *On Fasting*, Eusebius in *Ecclesiastical History* (A.D. 324).³

¹ For an excellent treatment on the introductory issues on the Book of Acts, see Craig L. Blomberg's book *From Pentecost to Patmos: An Introduction to Acts through Revelation* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 9-23; see also John McRay's book *Paul: His Life and Teaching* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003) for an excellent resource on the background and biography on the life of the apostle Paul. For a thorough treatment on the introductory issues on the Book of Acts, see Darrell L. Bock's commentary, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, ed. Robert W. Yarbrough and Robert H. Stein (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007). For an excellent exegetical commentary with an extensive background information, see Craig S. Keener's massive four-volume commentary, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012). For an excellent treatment on the biblical theology of Luke-Acts, see Bock's chapter, "A Biblical Theology of Luke-Acts," in *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, ed. Roy B. Zuck and Darrell L. Bock (Chicago: Moody, 1994); see also Bock's *A Theology of Luke and Acts*, *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, ed. Andreas J. Kostenberger (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012).

² It is almost universally acknowledged by Lukan scholars that these two documents were written by the same author. See F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, *New International Commentary on the New Testament*, rev. ed., ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 3.

³ D. Edmond Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1 (Winona Lake, IN: BMH, 1975), 248-49.

The **internal evidence** is intertwined with the Third Gospel, that both works have been authored by Luke, the beloved physician and traveling companion of Paul. The first verse of Acts refers to an earlier volume written to the same individual, Theophilus, and only the Gospel of Luke could qualify as that “**former treatise**.”⁴ The two works show strong similarities in language and style. Furthermore, the contents show a continuity one from another, in that Acts effectively picks up the account exactly where the Third Gospel ends. In other words, the Gospel of Luke provides the foundation for the story recorded in Acts.

The “**we-sections**” in Acts (16:10-17; 20:5–21:18; 27:1–28:16) were written by a friend and traveling companion of Paul. The “we-sections” contain specific information concerning this companion: 1) He first joined Paul’s company at Troas; 2) He worked with Paul during the mission at Philippi; 3) He reappeared as a companion of Paul following his visit to Philippi on the way to Jerusalem during the third missionary journey; 4) He traveled with Paul to Jerusalem where Paul was imprisoned; 5) After Paul’s two-year imprisonment at Caesarea, he accompanied Paul to Rome, experiencing the shipwreck en route.⁵ From these clues it is natural to conclude that Luke best fits all of these descriptions. The “we-sections” provide conclusive evidence, since all but two of Paul’s associates are named in the third person, the list can be narrowed to Titus and Luke. And, Titus has never been seriously regarded as a possible author of Acts, and Luke best fits the requirements.

Date

The proposed date for the Book of Acts varies greatly among New Testament scholars, ranging all the way from as early as the sixties in the first century to the middle of the second century.⁶ Most Acts scholars place the book in one of three periods of time within this range: 62-70, 80-95, or 115-30.⁷ However, there are solid reasons for maintaining the traditional date of

⁴ Robert G. Gromacki, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1974), 149.

⁵ D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 185-86.

⁶ John B. Polhill, *Acts*, New American Commentary, vol. 26, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992), 27-31.

⁷ Carson, Moo, and Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 190-94.

placing it in the early sixties. For instance, the Book of Acts ends with the apostle Paul's imprisonment in Rome. If Paul came to Rome around A.D. 60 and stayed there for two years (28:30), then the story of Acts ends in A.D. 62. It is commonly understood that Luke authored his works during Paul's imprisonment in Rome, which would date the Book of Acts around **A.D. 62-63**.

Furthermore, although the dating of the New Testament books cannot be fixed absolutely, it is safe to assume that Acts was composed before these **significant events**: the burning of Rome (A.D. 64), the first imperial persecution of Christians (A.D. 64-67), the second Roman imprisonment of Paul (A.D. 64-67), the Jewish rebellion against the Romans (A.D. 66), and the destruction both of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple by the Romans (A.D. 70).⁸ Luke certainly would have mentioned these significant events in his work if they had occurred before his writings. Therefore, it is probable that the Book of Acts was written in the early sixties, perhaps around A.D. 62-63.

Background

Luke formally dedicates both of his works to a certain man named **Theophilus** (Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-5), concerning whom there is very little information from the Scriptures other than these two passages. The address, "most excellent Theophilus" (Luke 1:3) indicates that he was an actual person of high social standing. The title is often used of Roman governors of Judea, but the designation might also be applied to an individual of great wealth or social prominence.⁹ While writing for the personal benefit of Theophilus (Luke 1:4), Luke clearly intended for his work to have a much wider circulation. Since Theophilus was a Gentile, it may be that Luke wrote to Theophilus as the representative of the larger circle of Gentile readers.

The **purpose** of the Book of Acts is also related to the purpose of the Third Gospel, since the two works are a two-volume work written to the same man. Luke's original plan was to write two volumes to give Theophilus "certainty of the things you have been taught" (Luke 1:4). Thus,

⁸ Gromacki, *New Testament Survey*, 150.

⁹ Merrill C. Tenney, *New Testament Survey*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), 177.

if the **first work** dealt with the person and earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, then the **second work** recorded the birth, growth and expansion of the early church. In the first was the record “of all that Jesus *began* both to do and teach” (Acts 1:1) and the second revealed what Christ *continued* to do and teach through the Holy Spirit in the lives of the apostles and the early church.¹⁰ In other words, the Gospel indoctrinated Theophilus in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ, while the Book of Acts instructed him about the lives and activities of the apostles (1:1-2).

Through Luke-Acts the author demonstrated to both Theophilus and the Gentile audience as a whole, that Christianity didn’t appear out of a vacuum but is rooted in the Old Testament, Jesus and the apostles and is, therefore, trustworthy. In other words, how did a small and exclusively Jewish religion that was confined primarily around Palestine grow to be an inclusive and worldwide faith? As Toussaint succinctly put it, “The purpose of the Book of Acts was to explain with the Gospel of Luke the orderly and sovereignly directed progress of the kingdom message from Jews to Gentiles, and from Jerusalem to Rome.”¹¹ In short then, the purpose of the Book of Acts is **historical** as well as **pastoral**. It is historical in that it provides an orderly and accurate account of the beginnings of Christianity. It is pastoral in that it provides a source of assurance for those spiritually young through strengthening of their faith.

Distinctive Characters

There are many distinctive features in the Book of acts. **First** of all, like the Book of Genesis of the Old Testament, Acts records the **beginnings** of many events concerning the **church**. For example, the Book of Acts records the first election of the church (1:23-26), the first conversion (2:41), the first miracle (3:1-11), the first persecution (4:1-4), the first chastisement (5:1-11), the first deacons (6:1-7), the first sermon by a layman (7:2-53), the first Christian martyr (7:54-60), the first Gentile converts (10:44-48), the first time the name “Christian” is mentioned (11:26), the first apostolic martyr (12:2), the first call to missionary service (13:1-2), the first church debate or council (15:1-30), and the first preaching in Europe (16:12-13).

¹⁰ Gromacki, *New Testament Survey*, 149.

¹¹ Stanley D. Toussaint, “Acts,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1983), 349-51.

Second, the Book of Acts is a book of **transition**.¹² It bridges the gap between the gospels and the epistles, between the ministry of Christ and the activities of the apostles. It is therefore an introductory book, full of historical background concerning the church. Therefore, it is imperative to be cautious in building one's entire theological positions of doctrine and practice upon what is found in the book alone. Many events recorded in the Book of Acts were never intended to become a pattern for every generation of Christians to follow. Gromacki's summary of the uniqueness of signs and wonders in Acts is insightful:

In Acts God was doing a new thing: He was starting the church age which has lasted now for two thousand years. In the divine introduction were many unusual signs and miracles that were never designed to be sought after by later Christians. God practiced this same principle in earlier ages. When the law was given to Moses originally the event was accompanied by thunder, lightning, smoke, and an earthquake (Exod 19:16-18); however, when the law was given the second time, these phenomena were not repeated (Exod 34). Why? Because the age of the law had already begun. God nourished the children with manna for forty years, but once the Israelites were in Canaan, the manna stopped. They were to work the land and to trust the Lord for its increase; they were not to expect a repetition of the manna provision.¹³

Third, the Book of Acts is also a book of **mission** and **witness**. Jesus charged: “. . . and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (1:8). Incidentally, the Book of Acts follows the outline given in 1:8 in tracing the witness of the church in Jerusalem, then to Judea and Samaria, and finally to the ends of the earth.

Fourth, the Book of Acts is also significant because it provides the **historical background** for many of the Pauline Epistles. Acts describes the historical background for the following epistles: Romans (28:14-31); 1 and 2 Corinthians (18:1-18); Galatians (13:3-14:28); Ephesians (19:1-41); Philippians (16:6-40); 1 and 2 Thessalonians (17:1-9); 1 Timothy (19:1-41; 20:17-38); and Titus (27:1-13). Thus, the Book of Acts forms the background and setting for most of Paul's writings. As Bruce summarizes poignantly, “It is Luke that we have to thank for

¹² Toussaint, 349.

¹³ Gromacki, *New Testament Survey*, 154-55.

the coherent record of Paul's activity. Without his record, we should be incalculably poorer. Even with it, there is much about Paul's career that remains obscure to us; there would be much more if we had no book of Acts."¹⁴

¹⁴ Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, 17.

II. ANALYSIS

Theme

The Birth, Growth, and Expansion of the Church

Outline

The outline of the Book of Acts follows the witness of the church recorded in Jesus' command: "... and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (1:8).

I. THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM (1:1–7:60)

- A. The Inception of the Church (1:1–2:4)
- B. The Witness of the Church (2:5–7:60)

II. THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA (8:1–12:25)

- A. The Witnesses Scattered (8:1-3)
- B. The Witness of Philip (8:4-40)
- C. The Witness of Saul (9:1-31)
- D. The Witness of Peter (9:32–11:18)
- E. The Witness of the Church (11:19–12:25)

III. THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH (13:1–28:31)

- A. The First Missionary Journey (13:1–14:28)
- B. The Jerusalem Council (15:1-35)
- C. The Second Missionary Journey (15:36–18:22)
- D. The Third Missionary Journey (18:23–21:16)
- E. The Journey to Rome (21:17–28:31)

-Alternative Methods of Outlining the Book of Acts:

1. Main Characters

- I. Apostle Peter (Chaps. 1–12)
- II. Apostle Paul (Chaps. 13–28)

2. Progress Reports

Progress report #1: “And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (2:47).

Progress report #2: “So the Word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly” (6:7).

Progress report #3: “Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria . . . was strengthened; and it was encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord” (9:31).

Progress report #4: “But the Word of God continued to increase and spread” (12:24).

Progress report #5: “So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers” (16:5).

Progress report #6: “In this way the Word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power” (19:20).

Progress report #7: “Paul . . . welcomed all who came to see him. Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ” (28:30-31).

III. SYNTHESIS

The Book of Acts follows the outline given in 1:8 in tracing the witness of the church in Jerusalem, then to Judea and Samaria, and finally to the ends of the earth. Hence, it is divided into **three major sections**: the witness of the church in Jerusalem (1:1–7:60); the witness of the church in Judea and Samaria (8:1–12:25); and the witness of the church to the ends of the earth (13:1–28:31).

Luke's **first major section** includes his account of the **inception of the church** (1:1–2:4) and the **witness of the church in Jerusalem** (2:5–7:60). Luke begins Acts with a **prologue** (1:1–5), which reveals three things concerning the treatise. First, Luke explains to Theophilus that this present work is a **sequel** to his first work, the Gospel, in which he described the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Second, that the ministry Jesus had begun would be continued through the apostles. And third, that future ministry would be carried out through the Holy Spirit who would empower the apostles and others for service.

In response to the disciples' question whether at the coming of the Holy Spirit Jesus was going to restore the **kingdom** to Israel, Jesus responded by not denying the future establishing of the kingdom, but rather informed them that the timing was God's decision. Hence, this period characterized by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit is the postponing of Israel's kingdom (1:6–11). Luke also sets the stage for the inception of the church by describing the interim period between the ascension of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This preparation period (1:12–26) was characterized as a time of waiting through prayer (1:12–14) for the coming of the Holy Spirit as Jesus commanded: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (1:4–5). During the prayer meetings, the disciples also chose the twelfth apostle through casting of lots (1:15–26).

The **Pentecost** (2:1–4) was the fulfillment of Jesus' promise that in a few days after His departure that the disciples would receive the **baptism of the Holy Spirit**. The promised Holy

Spirit came on the day of Pentecost. And since the Spirit is invisible, it would have been impossible to know if and when He came unless some physical evidence was given. To verify His coming, the believers witnessed **three phenomena**: they heard the sound of a violent, rushing wind, since the wind was used to symbolize the Spirit's coming (cf. Ezek 37:9, 14; John 3:8). Also, they saw tongues as of fire resting on each believer, since fire often describes the divine presence in Scripture (cf. Exod 3:2; 40:34-38). Furthermore, the believers began speaking in foreign tongues, demonstrating God's desire that the preaching of the message concerning Jesus Christ was to go out to the whole world. On the day of Pentecost, the church had been born through the coming and baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The church, having been born on the day of Pentecost (1:1-2:4), now began to witness concerning Jesus Christ in Jerusalem (2:5-7:60), just as He commanded before the ascension (1:8). Their first witness occurred on the day of Pentecost when the Jews from the dispersion had come from all over the world to celebrate the Jewish feast (2:5-47). When the Jews heard the disciples speaking in foreign languages, they inquired the meaning of the event. However, some were mocking them and attributing the phenomena to being drunk with wine. Then Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd, by attributing the phenomena as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. His sermon can be summarized by **two points**: first, God does pour forth His Spirit on man, and second, anyone who will call upon the risen Lord through repentance will be saved. The results of the sermon were unprecedented, in that about three thousand people accepted the message and were baptized, by distancing themselves from their generation and identifying with Jesus Christ (2:37-47).

The witness of the church in Jerusalem continued to flourish through the preaching of the disciples, led by Peter and John. In healing the crippled beggar in front of the temple gave Peter and John another opportunity to witness concerning the risen Savior (3:1-4:31). As a result of their preaching Peter and John were thrown into prison but the message continued to spread rapidly, evidenced by about five thousand men believing and being baptized. The early church was characterized by unity, love, power, and growth (4:32-35). As a result, Satan's counterattack on the church not only included **external opposition** through persecution but also internal defection through corruption. The story of Ananias and Sapphira is story of such **corruption**

from within (5:1-11). Satan's ceaseless attack on the church was evidenced by persecution from Israel's religious leaders on the apostles as they continued to perform miracles (5:12-16) and boldly preach concerning the risen Christ (5:17-42).

With the apostles' busy preaching schedule, there arose a need to choose qualified servants who could take care of the church's daily needs (6:1-7). **Stephen** was one of the seven qualified men who were full of the Spirit and wisdom. He not only effectively served the needs of the church but also ministered the Word of God and performed miracles. His ministry included the preaching of the message in the synagogues, where he irrefutably presented the message concerning the Messiah. As a result, he was falsely accused with blasphemy and was brought before the Sanhedrin (6:8-15). Stephen, in his defense (7:1-53), effectively refuted his accusers and concluded his message with a strong denunciation of the religious rulers. This speech led to his stoning (7:54-60), and the church had its first martyr. And, with the stoning of Stephen the church continued to spread the message of a risen Savior, even outside of Jerusalem.

The **second major section** of Acts describes the **church's witness in Judea and Samaria** (8:1–12:25), just as Jesus commanded before His ascension (1:8). The first three verses of chapter 8 serve as a transition of the church's witness from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria. Stephen's stoning was only the beginning of the church's persecution. With the persecution of the church in Jerusalem, all the believers except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria (8:1), bearing witness of the risen Savior in these regions as well. The church's witness in Judea and Samaria is centered around the witness of Philip (8:4-40), the witness of Saul (9:1-31), the witness of Peter (9:32–11:18), and the witness of the church (11:19–12:25).

Philip, one of the seven servants chosen along with Stephen, traveled about Samaria proclaiming Christ and performing miraculous signs. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to pray for the Holy Spirit upon them. Chapter 9 describes the conversion of one of the **church's great persecutor-turned-evangelist**: Saul, also known as **Paul**. After his miraculous conversion, he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God (9:20). Chapters 10–11 describe one of the most significant events of the church, through the **apostle Peter**. God's revelation given to Peter

concerning His desire to reach the Gentiles, opened the floodgates of the gospel to the Gentiles. The pouring out of the Holy Spirit's manifestations through the speaking of tongues served as proof of God's blessing of the Gentiles (10:45-46). The church at **Antioch of Syria** appropriately illustrated this truth. The church at Antioch became the first church to be predominantly Gentile in its make-up (11:19-30). At this time the Jerusalem church suffered a great persecution led by **Herod Agrippa I**. The church had its first martyred apostle when James was executed. Peter was also thrown into prison. However, the gospel continued to increase and spread throughout these regions (12:24).

The **third major section** of Acts describes the church's witness to the ends of the earth (13:1-28:31). The time had come in God's sovereignty when the moment was appropriate for the church to carry the gospel to the outer parts of the world, as it had never done before. This section includes the spread of the gospel message through the three missionary journeys of Paul and his journey to Rome. This section opens with a description of the Antiochian church selecting Paul and Barnabas for the missionary work upon the Holy Spirit's command (13:1-3). The **first missionary journey** of **Paul** and **Barnabas** (13:1-14:28) included their witnesses concerning the risen Savior to the regions of Cyprus (13:4-12) and Galatia (13:13-14:28). And it was at the end of this journey that the apostle Paul wrote his epistle to the **Galatians**.

Upon returning to the church in Antioch from their first missionary journey, the church was engaged in one of the most crucial moments of her life. The issue facing the church was whether the Gentiles had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved. The **Jerusalem Council** (15:1-35) was an historical milestone for the church, for the leaders of the church decided that the Gentiles were not required to be circumcised or keep the law of Moses in order to be saved, but were nevertheless required to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood (15:19-20).

The **second missionary journey** (15:36-18:22) describes the witness of **Paul** and **Silas** in Syria, Cilicia and Galatia (15:41-16:5), in Macedonia (16:6-17:15), and in Achaia (17:16-18:17). The journey commenced from Antioch and brought the gospel into Europe. The missionary journey includes the well-known accounts such as Lydia's conversion, the conversion

of the Philippian jailer, Paul's ministries in Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth, where he spent a year and a half, teaching the Corinthians the word of God. It was during this journey that Paul wrote the two epistles to the **Thessalonians**.

The **third missionary journey** (18:23–21:16) describes the witness of Paul throughout Galatia and Phrygia, Ephesus, Macedonia and Achaia, Troas, Miletus, Tyre, Ptolemais and Caesarea. After spending a period of time in Antioch of Syria, Paul began his third missionary journey. His itinerary included a lengthy stay in Ephesus where he ministered for about three years, longer than any other place on the third journey. His ministry there was extremely effective (19:20). It was during this journey that he went up to Jerusalem to witness for the Lord, where he was arrested. It was also during this journey the apostle Paul wrote three of his epistles: **1 Corinthians** in Ephesus; **2 Corinthians** in Macedonia; and **Romans** in Corinth.

The fifth and concluding part of this lengthy section of Acts describes Paul's journey to Rome (21:17–28:31). The journey to Rome includes his witness in Jerusalem (21:17–23:35), his witness in Caesarea (24:1–26:32), his witness on the way to Rome (27:1–28:15), and his witness in Rome (28:16–31). In Jerusalem the apostle bore witness to the God's activities to the Jewish Christians when he was arrested by the Jewish authorities. During his arrest in Jerusalem Paul gave a number of defenses before Jewish and Roman authorities. When his life was endangered Paul was transferred to Caesarea, where he also bore witness concerning the risen Lord. Paul's testimonies before leaders including **Felix** (24:1–27), **Festus** (25:1–12), and **Agrippa** (25:13–26:32). And, it was before King Festus that Paul demanded to be tried as a Roman citizen before Caesar (25:11). Paul also witnessed for the risen Lord even on his way to Rome aboard the ship (27:1–44), on the island of Malta (28:1–10), and on the way Rome from Malta (28:11–15). When the apostle arrived in Rome, he continued to preach Christ tirelessly to the Jews in Rome (28:16–31). And, it was during his first Roman imprisonment (28:30) that the apostle wrote his four prison epistles: **Philemon**, **Ephesians**, **Colossians**, and **Philippians**. In summary, then, the Book of Acts traces the inception of the church with the coming and baptism of the Holy Spirit and, the continuing work of the Holy Spirit through the apostles in spreading the gospel of the risen Lord to the ends of the earth.

IV. NOTES

I. THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM (1:1–7:60)

A. The Inception of the Church (1:1–2:4)

1. The prologue (1:1-5)

2. The postponement (1:6-11)

3. The preparation (1:12-26)

4. The Pentecost (2:1-4)

B. The Witness of the Church (2:5–7:60)

1. The witness at Pentecost (2:5-47)

a. the reaction by the crowd (2:5-13)

b. the reply of Peter (2:14-36)

c. the results of Peter's sermon (2:37-47)

2. The witness of Peter and John (3:1–4:31)

a. their witness before the crowd (3:1-26)

b. their witness before the Sanhedrin (4:1-22)

c. their witness before the believers (4:23-31)

3. The witness of the apostles (4:32–5:42)

a. the power of the apostles (4:32–5:16)

b. the persecution of the apostles (5:17-42)

4. The witness of Stephen (6:1–7:60)

a. his designation (6:1-7)

b. his detention (6:8-15)

c. his defense (7:1-53)

d. his death (7:54-60)

II. THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA (8:1–12:25)

A. The Witnesses Scattered (8:1-3)

1. The persecution of the church by the Jews (8:1-2)

2. The persecution of the church by Saul (8:3)

B. The Witness of Philip (8:4-40)

1. His witness in Samaria (8:4-25)

2. His witness to the Ethiopian (8:26-40)

C. The Witness of Saul (9:1-31)

1. The conversion of Saul (9:1-19)
2. The confessions of Saul (9:20-31)

D. The Witness of Peter (9:32–11:18)

1. His witness at Lydda and Sharon (9:32-35)
2. His witness at Joppa (9:36–10:23)
3. His witness at Caesarea (10:24-48)
4. His witness in Jerusalem (11:1-18)

E. The Witness of the Church (11:19–12:25)

1. The witness in Antioch (11:19-30)

2. The persecution in Jerusalem (12:1-25)

III. THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH (13:1–28:31)**A. The First Missionary Journey (13:1–14:28)**

1. The witnesses commissioned by the church at Antioch (13:1-3)

2. The witness at Cyprus (13:4-12)

3. The witness at Galatia (13:13–14:28)

B. The Jerusalem Council (15:1-35)

1. The division (15:1-5)
2. The discussion (15:6-21)
3. The decision (15:22-35)

C. The Second Missionary Journey (15:36–18:22)

1. The witnesses parted at Antioch (15:36-40)
2. The witness at Syria, Cilicia and Galatia (15:41–16:5)
3. The witness at Macedonia (16:6–17:15)
4. The witness at Achaia (17:16–18:17)
5. The witness on the return to Antioch (18:18-22)

D. The Third Missionary Journey (18:23–21:16)

1. The witness at Galatia and Phrygia (18:23)
2. The witness at Ephesus (18:24–19:41)
3. The witness at Macedonia and Achaia (20:1-5)
4. The witness at Troas (20:6-12)
5. The witness at Miletus (20:13-38)
6. The witness at Tyre (21:1-6)
7. The witness at Ptolemais and Caesarea (21:7-16)

E. The Journey to Rome (21:17–28:31)

1. The witness in Jerusalem (21:17–23:35)

2. The witness in Caesarea (24:1–26:32)

3. The witness on the way to Rome (27:1–28:15)

4. The witness in Rome (28:16-31)

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***These are the books and commentaries I would recommend first.**