

The Book of Acts

— The message of the book — Andrew Fountain: Sept 20, 2015

Acts in Seven Sections

Section 1: They've just Begun	Acts 1
Section 2: They start to Do	Acts 3
Section 3: They're forced to flee	Acts 6:8
Section 4: God Opens Doors	Acts 9:32
Section 5: A Missions drive	Acts 13
Section 6: Extended Trips	Acts 16:6
Section 7: To Rome, then heaven	Acts 19:21

Each of the Seven Sections

- Starts with everyone comfortable
- Then the Spirit does something
- They are launched into a new area of ministry
- There is a period of growth and consolidation

Acts 1 - Section 1: They've just Begun

- **Place:** Jerusalem (no persecution)
- **Spirit:** "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." 2:4
- **Concludes:** "So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." 2:46–47

- **Jesus appears to them after his resurrection, tells them to wait**
- Ascends to heaven
- Gathered regularly together
- Spirit Fell
- Tongues and Preaching
- 3,000 saved
- Amazing level of community and spending time with each other
- No persecution

Acts 3 - Section 2: They start to Do

- **Place:** Jerusalem and the towns around
- **Spirit:** "Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: **In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.**" 3:6
- **Concludes:** "Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly

in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith." 6:7

- **One day in the temple...**

- Let to arrest and warning
- They pray for boldness and "2nd pentecost"
- Incredible love and generosity to one another, which Satan tried to spoil
- Signs and wonders increased causing a second arrest, but an angel freed them all
- They went and found them but Peter said "we must obey God rather than men"
- The community had grown so large that it became too much for the apostles to look after practical things
- Chose Seven and laid hands on them

Acts 6:8 - Section 3: They're forced to flee

- **Place:** Judea including Samaritans
- **Spirit:** "And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke." 6:10
- **Concludes:** "Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied." 9:31

- **The Seven received gifts: Stephen had a gift of understanding the Scripture that led to a radical conclusion**

- Stoned to death for daring to teach it
- Saul ravages the church and they are forced to spread all over the nation
- Philip (another of the 7) at Samaria
- Philip and the African Prince
- But amazingly Saul (aka Paul) is saved
- growth continued

Acts 9:32 - Section 4: God Opens Doors

- **Place:** Gentiles in Judea
- **Spirit:** "While Peter thought about the vision, **the Spirit said to him**, "Behold, three men are seeking you.
...While Peter was still speaking these words, the **Holy Spirit** fell upon all those who heard the word." 10:19,44
- **Concludes:** "But the word of God grew and multiplied." 12:24

- **Raising from the dead**

- Cornelius
- Peter has a vision
- Spirit falls on Gentiles
- Antioch church established, so Jerusalem church sent Barnabus, who then recruited Paul
- Intense persecution in Jerusalem: James killed & Peter imprisoned
- Herod dies and there is peace and growth.
- The spotlight moves up the coast to Antioch

Acts 13 - Section 5:

A Missions drive

- **Place:** Galatia
- **Spirit:** "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the **Holy Spirit said**, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 13:2
- **Concludes:** "So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily." 16:5

- **Barnabas & Paul are commissioned**

- Made a local trip into what is modern Turkey
- Preached first in synagogues, then to Gentiles
- Paul does his first miracle (same as Peter's)
- Paul stoned and they assume he is dead, but...
- Church leaders in Jerusalem decided that Gentiles have no reason to keep the food/hygiene laws
- They make a second local trip and Timothy joins them

Acts 16:6 - Section 6:

Extended Trips

- **Place:** Macedonia & Greece
- **Spirit:** "Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the **Holy Spirit** to preach the word in Asia. ⁷After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the **Spirit** did not permit them... ⁹And a **vision** appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.'" 16:6-9
- **Concludes:** "So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed." 19:20

- **Try to make a third local trip, but...**

- Greek city of Philippi
- Lydia, possessed woman, thrown in jail, freed
- Went through many other cities, culminating in Athens, the capital (Ottawa)
- Ended up in Corinth (Toronto) where he set up a bible school for 18 months
- Moved to Ephesus (Montreal) where he set up another school for 2 years
- God was working signs and wonders, and there was a dramatic exposing of demonic occult magic

Acts 19:21 - Section 7:

To Rome, then heaven

- **Place:** Journey to Rome
- **Spirit:** "When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed **in the Spirit**, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, 'After I have been there, I must also see Rome.'" 19:21
- **Concludes:** "Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him." 28:30-31

- **Paul had been given a vision that he should go to Rome, but wanted to report back to Jerusalem first, to encourage them. (no twitter or facebook or blog)**

- On the way back he survived a riot, preached for hours and someone fell asleep and died (same

miracle as Peter)

- Tearfull goodbye at Ephesus
- Hangs out with James and other leaders at J.
- Nearly killed by Jews because of a false rumour but saved by Romans
- Jewish leaders make accusation, so arrested
- Appeals to Caesar
- Sea voyage to Rome
- Shipwrecked at Malta, but amazing story
- Finally reaches Rome and given quite a bit of freedom
- **I used to be taught "Apostolic Era"**

What we can learn

1. We are in the same age as then
 - The book does not have a "proper" ending, but continues
 - There is a section 8, 9, 10 etc
2. The Spirit is in Charge
 - He will move us forward—rely on him and look to him
3. There are times of calm growth and times of crazy change
4. Be excited about what God is doing!

- **Message in Athens:**

Updated on 2015-09-27 by Andrew Fountain