

Dear Bible Study Leader,

I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you because of your faith and faithfulness to lead others to get into God's Word and to get God's Word into them. This fills me with grateful worship, because then God will do wonderful and miraculous things. Even though I do not know you personally yet, I want you to know I am praying for you as you study and lead others in this study.

Together we will now begin studying the birth of the Church as we study the books of Acts and Romans. These two books are so foundational to our understanding of the church, the Body of Christ, and the life-changing truths of God's love, grace, mercy, justification, salvation and sanctification. Like our other studies, we will only be focusing on a practical devotional survey of these two books. However, my prayer is that this study will open these books to you, encourage you to dig deeper, and grow stronger in your faith so you can better lead others. I encourage you to read, re-read and then read these books again.

The one history book of the New Testament, the book of Acts, could have been titled "The Acts of the Apostles" or "The Acts of the Holy Spirit" or perhaps even better, "The Acts of the Risen Christ In and Through His Church." There is so much we can learn from the first-century church. "All these things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings to us..." (1 Corinthians 10:11) In the book of Acts, there are many examples for us and our churches and we will find many warnings.

Then together we will look at the book of Romans, the theological masterpiece of the apostle Paul. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we will study justification, the main message of this book. We will learn how justification applies to us, the Jews – God's chosen people - and to the world. And again, as we go through these books we will be asking and answering those critical questions:

- What does this say? (Observation)
- What does it mean? (Interpretation)
- What does this mean to me and to those I am leading? (Application)

As we move through this study may God bless you and make you a blessing to others as together we continue to allow God to write the "29<sup>th</sup> chapter" of the Acts of the Risen Christ as He continues to write the history of His Church through us!

Dick Woodward  
Pastor and Author of the Mini Bible College

## LEADING THE BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Mini Bible College has prepared this devotionally practical survey of the foundational books of the Bible. Your role as leader is to guide your group through the study sessions and exercises, helping them to understand the truth, discover the eternal principles, and, most importantly, apply them to their lives. This is a survey study that will take about three months and is designed to be more than just a course. This study is part of a strategic plan to provide you with the tools to nurture and grow personally and to help your church grow both spiritually and numerically.

To help you, we have provided the following tools:

- This Leader's Guide
- Report forms
- Audio of the Acts–Romans series (Audio Lessons NT 31-43)
- A study booklet on Acts–Romans
- A set of workbooks for the students

### **Before class**

- Personally start inviting people to come to this spiritual banquet. “Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests” (Matthew 22:9-10).
- Prepare yourself in prayer for those who will attend. If possible, pray for them by name. Only God can change the hearts of people, and prayer is the most powerful tool. “Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up” (Luke 18:1).
- Ask for help. Do not try to do everything yourself. Invite one or two people to help with music, singing, greeting, and keeping records.
- Review the lesson and understand the lesson objective.
- Become familiar with the material; listen, read, and study each lesson and memorize the Bible verse before class time.
- Be sure all materials are ready for each class.
- Make sure the meeting area is adequate and comfortable for the class.

### **During Class**

**(Remember to try to keep the class time to one hour and a half.)**

- Greet everyone as they arrive. Remember how nice it is when you are welcomed? Extend God's welcome to all. Have someone serve as the greeter and introduce people to one another if they are not already acquainted.
- Open with a time of worship and prayer, asking God to help you and each one understand and apply God's Word to your lives.
- Recite the memory verse.
- Listen to the audio lesson.

- Work through the workbook, inviting discussion with a focus on application. We trust the questions will raise interesting discussion and understanding that will lead to application. If the group is large (more than 10), consider dividing it into smaller groups of three or four people to encourage discussion. Be sure to monitor the time and be careful that the conversation does not detract from the focus of the lesson and the study of God's Word.
- Thank all for coming and encourage attendance at the next class.
- Challenge the students to invite others to join the Bible study.
- Encourage the students to memorize the biblical passages of the lessons each week.

### **After Each Class**

- Gather up all materials.
- Restore the meeting room to the proper order. Leave things more orderly than you found them.
- Fill out and file report forms.
- If you are meeting in someone's home, be sure to thank them for their hospitality.

### **Special Instructions for Teaching Auditory Learners**

It is important to remember that those who cannot read and write learn and retain information differently than those of us who are literate. The auditory learners learn from listening and telling what they have heard. Illiteracy was not an obstacle in Jesus' day. It is good to remember and even tell those in your class that most of the disciples and the majority of the people who first shared and spread the Gospel could not read or write.

In many ways, auditory learners have a greater capacity to learn what they hear than we who must write something down to remember it. Take the time, therefore, to allow your students to hear the Scripture and the lessons, pausing the message and even going back to listen again to a portion if it was not understood, and then allow them to respond to questions. When auditory learners can "story back"—tell in their own words what they have heard and learned—it indicates that they have properly grasped the principle. Therefore, use the study questions to guide the study time as they will help in the learning process. Ask the questions out loud and encourage all to participate. This will lead them into a deeper understanding of God's Word and a stronger relationship with His Son, Jesus the Christ.

# The Acts of the Risen Christ

## Chapter One

### Audio lesson: New Testament 31



Objective: To introduce the book of Acts and the promise of the Holy Spirit.



*Then Jesus came to them and said: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Matthew 28:18-20

*“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on 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

The Book of Acts is the history book of the New Testament church. It connects the four Gospels to the letters of Paul and gives us much of the story behind the other New Testament writings. This book begins the same way the four Gospels end: with the Great Commission. In the Great Commission, Jesus told His disciples to “make disciples,” and in order to do that, they would have to go, preach, baptize, and teach. In the book of Acts, this is exactly what we see the disciples doing. It is the story of the Great Commission beginning to be fulfilled.

Chapter 2 describes the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. This was one of the most important events in the history of the people of God because the church simply cannot fulfill its purpose without the power of the Holy Spirit. This is also true for us as individuals. When we attempt to make a disciple for Jesus Christ, we are attempting the impossible without the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Book of Acts is the history of very ordinary people doing very extraordinary things because they are anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit of God. That same God, that same power, is available to us to do His work today.

1. **True** or false? The author of the book of Acts was Luke, a doctor, and he also wrote the third Gospel.
2. **True** or false? The Book of Acts begins where the Gospels end, with the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.
3. True or **false**? Because the Book of Acts is a book of history, it is not very important for us to study today.



4. True or **false**? The stories in the book of Acts are all neatly resolved, showing that the works of the early church had concluded and its era had come to an end.

*Unless otherwise noted, choose one best answer for each question.*

5. What other titles have people suggested for the book of Acts?
- The Acts of the Apostles
  - The Acts of the Holy Spirit
  - The Acts of the Risen Lord
  - All of the above.**
6. What was God's purpose in giving us history books like the book of Acts?
- Only to give us examples to follow
  - Only to give us warnings to heed
  - To give us both examples and warnings**
  - Only to give us entertaining stories
7. According to the book of Acts what is the purpose of the church?
- To go and tell other people about the gospel
  - To make disciples of those who believe the gospel
  - To baptize them once they have believed the gospel
  - To teach them to obey all of Jesus Christ's commands
  - All of the above**
8. What promise were the disciples told to wait for in Jerusalem?
- The return of Jesus
  - The coming of the Holy Spirit in power**
  - The fulfillment of the Great Commission
  - The completion of their education

9. Why did Luke not end the story of the book of Acts?
- He ran out of paper.
  - The Church is still writing its own history today.**
  - He died before he finished writing.
  - He wrote the ending, but parts of the book were lost throughout history.
10. How many decided to follow Jesus as their Lord because of Peter's first message?
- About 3,000**
  - Everyone who was there
  - Almost no one because they were all afraid
  - Luke does not tell us how many
11. What was the significance of the Feast of Pentecost?
- It was a celebration of the harvest.**
  - It was a memorial to Jewish martyrs.
  - It was a celebration of the Exodus, God's deliverance of the Jews from Egypt.
  - It was simply a day for Jews to take time off from work.
12. Why was this an appropriate and symbolic time for the Holy Spirit to come?
- It represents the fact that we do not have to do any work anymore; the Great Commission is all up to God's power.
  - It kept the Spirit's presence a secret from the Jewish leaders since so many of them were out of town for the holiday.
  - It represents the Spirit's power working through us to harvest souls and fulfill the Great Commission.**
  - It represents the last of God's great works among humanity.
13. What did the miraculous signs of Pentecost mean?
- They were a pattern that we must duplicate again and again.
  - They signified that only the apostles could have access to supernatural power.
  - They teach us that we can only encounter God in a very emotional experience.
  - They were a prophecy to those who heard, as well as a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.**



In what ways can the Holy Spirit help you know God and fulfill His purposes? Have you asked God for this gift of being empowered by His Spirit? If not, would you consider asking Him to empower you for His purposes now?

---



---



---



Thank God that He has come to His people in power and that He is still working through the church today. Ask Him to continue to empower you through His Spirit, and ask Him to give you opportunities to help fulfill the Great Commission this week.



## Going Deeper

1. For what did Jesus instruct His followers to wait before they began to obey His Great Commission? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

2. What is the significance of the fact that the book of Acts begins with the Great Commission and all four Gospels end with that same Commission? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3. How did the apostles know they were to teach those who professed to be disciples of Jesus?

---

---

4. When you decide to personally obey the Great Commission, what four specific commands of Jesus are you to obey? (Consider Matthew 28: 18-20) \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

5. How long does it take to teach a newly-professed disciple all the things that Jesus commanded the apostles to observe while they were following Him every day for three years? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

6. Generally speaking, is the Church of Jesus Christ obeying these four commandments of Jesus today? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

7. Thinking specifically, have you ever taken the Great Commission of Jesus seriously enough to personally obey that commission yourself? Do you agree with this statement of a devout missionary statesman: “The Great Commission is the Charter of the Church and like any other organization the Church must fulfill the terms of its charter or it should cease and desist”?

---

---