



January 9, 2023

Have you ever tried to accomplish something without any instruction? Sure, we can muddle through with trial and error and *maybe* make a little progress. But isn't it always helpful to have direction and an example of how to do something, enabling us to streamline our efforts and see profitable results? Well, God gave us clear direction and examples of how to grow in His Word and effectively move that Word when He had the Book of Acts recorded for His people.

This unique revelation was written down by the man of God Luke, a faithful fellow worker with the Apostle Paul. What God had Luke record was how He, God, worked in the lives of the believers via the gift of holy spirit. The Book of Acts testifies of the many acts of God in the first-century Church, beginning at the time of Jesus Christ's ascension.

*Acts 1:8,9:*

*But ye [the twelve apostles] shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost [holy spirit] is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me [Jesus] both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

*And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

With the coming of the day of Pentecost, recorded in Acts 2, came a new administration—the Grace Administration. This Book of Acts is a book of transition between the former Christ Administration, represented by the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and this new administration, represented by the Church Epistles of Romans through Thessalonians. During the time frame that this book is written about, which began around 28 A.D. and lasted until sometime between 61 and 64 A.D., the Apostles Peter and Paul were the two central figures who rose up to lead and serve God's people. Throughout Acts, we also see how the believers as a whole lived the truths and shared the good news of this new Grace Administration.

And these truths that were proven in the Book of Acts were eventually written down and clarified in the Church Epistles by revelation to the Apostle Paul. In other words, Acts illustrates the principles that would eventually be reflected in these seven Epistles.

The Book of Acts illustrates to us how to grow in and move the Word in any area, in any century, no matter what the culture or what the circumstances. This book documents principles of spiritual growth and the manifestation of power in the outreach of God's Word. By studying it, every believer and group of believers in the Grace Administration can learn how to grow in the quality of their spiritual life *and* how to multiply numerically *and* how to expand geographically. Like a godly blueprint, Acts lays out the framework for success in holding forth the Word in love, whatever the time or culture. And this blueprint for success is how we in The Way Ministry are moving the Word over the world.

*Acts 19:20:*

*So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

Examples in Acts of *spiritual growth* can be seen in the Apostle Peter, who had initially maintained the mind-set of a Judean after he was born again, separating himself from Gentiles. He then grew in his understanding of this new Administration of Grace and took God's Word *to* the Gentiles. He overcame the influence of the religion and culture of his day. In Acts, we can also read about how Paul grew from being an enemy of the Church to becoming its most impacting apostle and teacher of God's Word. Within these records and others are keys to growing up into Christ and overcoming the world's influences as more than conquerors.

The *expansion* of the Christian Church in the first century revolved around many faithful believers who undauntingly spoke the Word with boldness in four major geographic areas. The outreach of the Word progressed in Jerusalem initially; then Antioch in Syria developed; then Ephesus in Asia Minor; and then later Rome. By following the key players in this movement of God's Word, such as Peter, Philip, Paul, and Barnabas, we can learn so much about boldness and fearlessness in speaking God's Word.

*Acts 2:14:*

*But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words.*

*Acts 8:5:*

*Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.*

*Acts 14:21:*

*And when they [Paul and Barnabas in Derbe] had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch.*

There is so much more to glean from the pages of Acts. If you haven't read this book recently, why not dive into the pages of this adventurous record of the first-century believers? Follow their God-inspired journey of spiritual growth and their dynamic examples of moving God's delivering Word. The Book of Acts is God's revealed blueprint of how His Word is to move over the world. So let's follow His directions for the most profitable results!

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