

Acts Introduction Study notes from the message preached on the 5th September.

Guide Questions:	
General	Acts was part of a 2 volume writing - Luke was the first account (Luke 1:4) & Acts was the author's sequel to continue the story.
Who was the Author of Acts?	Luke - a Gentile physician who became a travelling companion who jumped in and out of Paul's missionary journey's that we read accounts of in Acts. This writing moves between recounting events he has researched & a personal account of experiences he was a part of (Acts 16: 9-10....notice the pronoun change to "we") Luke joined Paul in Troas during the second missionary journey (Acts 16: 6-11), was left in Phillipi (Acts 17:1) and was picked up again on the third missionary journey (Acts 20:5). We see through Paul's second letter to Timothy, which Paul wrote from Rome, that Luke was also with Paul in Rome (2 Timothy 4: 11).
Who is the intended audience?	Theophilus - we are unsure of exactly who he was - thought to possibly be a Roman dignitary or possibly a wealthy person from Antioch. Either way he was someone who Luke was writing to as a way to bring an evidence base to the message that Theophilus had already received about Jesus (Luke 1: 1-4)
When was Acts of the Apostles written?	Most popular scholarly opinion is somewhere between 65-70AD. Acts covers the period of time from 30-62AD
What Genre of writing is Acts?	It falls into the genre of History as it recounts some of the key historical events of the first 32 year period following Jesus's ascension.
Specific verses referenced during message:	
Verse 3	<p>Time period of 40 - mentioned 146 times in scripture.....significant period of preparation, testing or trial Moses 40 years in Egypt, 40 years in desert before burning bush, twice 40 days up Mount Sinas, spies sent to promised land for 40 days, Jonah warned Nineveh for 40 days, Ezekiel lay on his right side for 40 days to symbolise Judah's sin, Elijah went 40 days without food & water, the nation of Israel wandered in the desert because of it's sin for 40 years, Jesus was in the desert for 40 days before his public ministry began and it was 40 years after Jesus crucifixion that the temple was destroyed in Jerusalem just as he had prophesied days before his crucifixion (Matthew 24: 1-2).</p> <p>This 40 days was a time of preparation for Jesus's disciples - Jesus talked to them about the Kingdom of God - they had the benefit of his presence with the resurrected Jesus.</p>
Verses 4-5	<p>Luke chose to single out "this one time"....why? Because the key element isn't the info about the Kingdom of God, the key element is the power to bring about the extension of the Kingdom of God - it's the availability and power of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>For us to live like Jesus, for us to continue his Kingdom mission, for us to boldly claim the accessibility to all people of a restored relationship with God we must be filled with the Holy Spirit, just like Jesus was</p> <p>Ref : John 14: 15-17</p>

John 14: 15-17	<p>The disciples were experiencing the presence of the Spirit through Jesus, but when he went they would experience the power of the Spirit as it came to indwell them.</p> <p>If Jesus was infilled with the Spirit to live his life as a perfect representation of Christ, how much more is it necessary for the Spirit to infill us to equip us to live a life the represents Christ to the world? Jesus couldn't infill them, so he left having completed that part of his earthly mission, so God's plan for the extension of his Kingdom to be spread through his disciples and 2000 years later through us.</p>
Verse 6 (Acts ch1)	<p>The Disciples were still constricted by their pre-conceived ideas of how God will work - 'when will you overturn the political and religious structures through power and force?'</p> <p>They were bound by their preconceived religious ideas - even after 3 years and 40 days with Jesus.</p> <p>What are your pre-conceived ideas of how God will work in your life - through you, around you, in you? What are your pre-conceived ideas about the Book of Acts?</p>
Verse 8	<p>Verse 8 - Key verse for understanding the Book of Acts and what it's about.</p> <p>Luke tells us in Verse 8 what the whole book is about, right up front - a bit like us laying out where a message is going to go.</p> <p>I would humbly suggest - this book has been named in a way that points away from the main character in this book and focusses us on the supporting cast!</p> <p>This book should be the "Acts of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the Apostles!"</p> <p>Why is this so important for us to grasp up front as we start this journey into this part of Scripture?</p> <p>Because I feel too weak & scared to be Peter, I feel so theologically inadequate to emulate Paul, but I can humbly submit and be filled with the power of the same Holy Spirit that gave Peter his boldness and revealed the scriptures to Paul.</p> <p>This is an account of how the Holy Spirit spread the Good News of Jesus to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the Earth.</p>
Overview	<p>Chapter 1-7 - The spread of the Good News about Jesus in Jerusalem.</p> <p>Chapter 8-9 - The spread of the Good News about Jesus in Judea & Samaria.</p> <p>Chapter 10-28 - The spread of the Good News about Jesus to the ends of the earth (Gentiles reaching the epicentre of civilisation, Rome).</p>