

Finding the Church

Acts 1-28

MISSISSIPPI

Our Purpose in Studying Acts

To learn from the early church so that we could seek to be **the church** in this emerging culture!

ISRAEL

What is the church?

A community of people who are truly saved by Jesus Christ.

ISRAEL

Why does the church exist?

- Because of Jesus (death/resurrection)
- For Jesus (glorify Himself)
- To worship Jesus (exalt)
- To see Jesus (witness)
- So that others would come to know Jesus (evangelize)

ISHE

Who builds the church?

Jesus Christ
(Matthew 16:18)

ISRAEL

What is Acts all about?

The church being the witness of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth
(Acts 1:8).

WITNESS

Witness?

- Worldwide
- Inclusive
- Demonstrating the providence of God
- Unity
- Power of the Holy Spirit
- Resurrection of Jesus
- Repentance and Forgiveness
- Faithfulness

WITNESS



**So when you think about Acts
think about:**

Being the witness of Jesus Christ

What helped the early church be a witness for Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth?

MISSISSIPPI

Themes?

- Constant Prayer
- Community Life
- Proclaiming the Hope of Jesus Christ
- Enduring Persecution

ISRAEL

So because of the gospel
we can be Jesus'
witnesses through prayer,
community, proclaiming
Jesus and enduring
persecution.

WITNESS

Constant Prayer?

- **CORPORATE prayer**

- Constantly praying together on one accord in a specific location (1:14; 2:42; 12:12)
- Came together for updates and prayed for more boldness to be a witness – (4:24)
- God was moving in the midst as they prayed – (4:31)
- Praying for the protection of their leaders – (12:5)

PSALM

Prayer? cont'd

- **LIFESTYLE of prayer**

- Prayed at a set time in a specific location (temple)
– (3:2)
- Leaders were constantly in the Scriptures and praying – (6:4)
- Responded in prayer for people who needed something – (8:14)
- Prayed over people to ask God for healing – (9:40)
- Individuals (Peter) prayed at specific times – (10:6)
- In hard times they prayed and sang worship songs – (16:25)

Prayer? cont'd

- **SELECTION of leaders**

- Prayed for who to select as leaders – (1:24)
- Laid hands and prayed over selected leaders to serve those in need (widows) – (6:6)
- Fasting and praying then laid hands on the leaders to be set apart – (13:3)

Prayer

God is calling us to gather
as a church in corporate
prayer, to have a lifestyle
of prayer and to pray over
and for our leaders.

PSALM

But Here's the Problem

- Your flesh doesn't like to pray.
- It's easier for you to depend on yourself.
- You are selfish with your time.
- You've bought into a culture that says the busier you are the more productive you are.
- We NEED Jesus!

WISDOM

Community Life?

- Gathered Together

- as men, women and children in a specific location - (1:12)
- constantly fellowshiping around the Word – (2:42)
- in corporate worship and house to house – (5:42)
- to learn – (11:26)
- spending time in peoples homes to pray – (12:12; 21:8)

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Community? cont'd

- **ESTABLISHED FRIENDSHIPS**

- They saw themselves as friends that were important enough to receive updates – (4:23)

- **ACCOUNTABILITY**

- Community allowed for wisdom to be shared and advice to be received – (19:30)

Community? cont'd

- **SHARED**

- Connected at the heart and mission whereby they shared their resources so that no one lacked anything – (4:32)

- **SUPPORTIVE**

- They worked together to support other Christians – (11:29)
- The church rallied around those who were beaten down and discouraged – (14:20)
- The church made sacrifices to support one another in times of need – (28:14, 15)

Community? cont'd

- **WELCOMING spirit**

- This growing community had a welcoming spirit where new people were always welcomed – (5:14)

WELCOMING

Community

God is calling us to consistently gather together to establish trusting relationships, hold each other accountable, share our resources, be supportive and welcoming to those who desire to join us.

WISDOM

But Here's the Problem

- You are **guarded** because you've been hurt before
- You are not used to **trusting** people who love well.
- You have bought into **self-sufficient living** verses community living.
- You are **scared** of the unknown.
- You **NEED** Jesus!

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Proclaiming the Hope of Jesus Christ

• OUR MESSAGE

- Jesus was **killed** but God raised him up – (2:23, 24; 17:3)
- Jesus was **raised up** and we are his witnesses – (2:32)
- **Repent** and be baptized – (2:38)
- Repent and **turn away** from your sins – (3:19)

ESPERANZA

Proclaiming the Hope of Jesus Christ

• TEACHING & PREACHING

- The apostles teaching – (2:42)
- Teaching the gospel (good news) – (5:21; 13:27-33; 14:7; 15:35)
- From house to house and in the temple – (5:42)
- Preaching the gospel from the OT – (8:35)
- Preaching Jesus as the Son of God – (9:20; 18:5)
- Turning people from idols – (14:15)
- Expounding on the kingdom & Jesus – (28:23)
- Welcoming those who want to hear – (28:30-31)

Proclaiming the Hope of Jesus Christ

- **AUDIENCE**

- Jews, Gentiles, Samaritans, handicapped, wealthy women, outcasts, jailers, philosophers, occult, governors and kings – (2-5; 8:4-40; 10; 14; 16; 24)

ESPERANZA

Proclaiming the Hope of Jesus Christ

- **MISSIONAL (taking it to people)**
 - Infiltrating and **saturating** communities with the gospel – (8:25, 40)
 - **Preaching** to the city – (14:21)
 - Taking the gospel to **families** – (16:32)
 - Taking the gospel to **national leaders** – (26:23)
 - With persistent **boldness** – (19:8)

Proclaiming the Hope of Jesus Christ

God is calling us to
teach the message of
the gospel to the
church so that we can
take it to everyone.

WISDOM

But Here's the Problem

- You must be a **true** believer.
- You **think** you have to be a preacher.
- You must understand that Jesus wants to be Savior and **Lord** of your life.
- You **can't play** with sin.
- You **NEED** Jesus!

SIN

Persecution?

- OPPOSITION FROM RELIGIOUS PEOPLE

- **Annoyed** by the preaching of the gospel – (4:2)
- Persecuted for preaching **against religious traditions** – (18:12)

- JEALOUSY

- People will be **filled with jealousy** by the influence of the gospel – (5:17)
- People will seek to **stir up trouble** – (17:5)

WISDOM

Persecution?

- **DESIRED SILENCE**

- Don't preach about Jesus! – (5:28)

- **OFFENDED BY THE TRUTH**

- I don't like what you are saying so they seek to kill you – (5:33)
 - The people **got mad** because of hard truth – (7:54)

SILENCE

Persecution?

- INSTIGATING LIES

- Secretly **getting stuff started by lying** on God's people – (6:11)
- Seeking to **poison people's minds** – (14:2, 19; 21:28)

- HARD TIMES RESULTING IN OPPORTUNITY

Persecution took the church in **new regions** – (8:1; 11:19)

PERSECUTION

Persecution?

- **REJECTION OF THE MESSAGE**

- People will seek to **pull people from the faith** – (13:8)
- People will **mock** those who proclaim truth – (17:32)

- **HATERS**

- False teachers will try to **come in and rise up** from the inside – (15:1)
- People who **benefit from sin** will hate the church – (16:19)
- The gospel will put evil sinners **out of business** – (19:25)
- People will hate the church for preaching a **gospel of inclusion** – (22:22)

SINNERS

Persecution?

- STUBBORN

- People will be **stubborn** and speak evil against the truth – (19:8)
- There are some that will continually **reject the message** of the gospel – (28)

- PART OF THE CALL

We will **experience** many tribulations – (14:22)

STUBBORN

Persecution

God is calling us to stay faithful to Jesus and gracious towards one another as persecution arises from within and from outside His church.

WISDOM

But Here's the Problem

- You are **spoiled** and always want **your way**.
- You want Jesus but a life of **ease and comfort**.
- You **lack guts** and passion to stick it out!
- You have the potential of being **deceived** by the enemy.
- You **NEED** Jesus!

WISDOM

Do you want to be on
mission with the local
church to be a witness
to the ends of the
earth?

MISSISSIPPI

We welcome you to join us!

- True **believer**?
- **Pray** and gather to pray?
- Take the **next step** into community?
- Let the **gospel change** your life?
- Get **on board**?
- **Endure** persecution?

WELCOME

Celebrating Two Wonderful Years!

As **witnesses** of Jesus Christ to
the ends of the earth...

WITNESS

What needs to happen
in you in order to get
on mission with Jesus'
Church?

MISSISSIPPI