



Discussion Notes

The Book of Acts • Acts 1:1–11
October 5, 2025 • Luke Knight

On September 28, we heard an introduction to Acts from Rikk Watts (listen online if you missed it). This week, we cover the prologue, which serves to orient the listener, but also directs us to what to expect next in the narrative. Acts was written by Luke, who also wrote The Gospel of Luke.

Acts is a sequel, though not a biography like the Gospels are. Acts is a selective and limited curation of events following the gospel's spread in Jerusalem and then to "the ends of the earth." Jesus is no less present in Acts, but remains the same character — active more than ever by the presence of his Holy Spirit.

1:1–3

- Theophilus is likely the sponsor of the book.
- "...all Jesus began..." — Acts is a continuation of the arrival of God's kingdom.
- "Convincing proofs" and many appearances, a clarity and certainly to Jesus' having suffered (a theme in Acts), died and rose.
- A mention of the Holy Spirit, in no way disconnected from Jesus.

1:4–5

- Luke highlights Jesus' *command* not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for the Holy Spirit
- Jesus' cousin John had baptized people in water, preparing the way for Jesus, and now Jesus will make way for the immense and overwhelming promise of his Spirit. In the gospels, God has been touchable and knowable in Jesus, a person in a room, on a hillside, in a boat, on a cross, around a table over a meal even after his resurrection. But things are about to change again, because just as John baptized in water, Jesus tells his disciples to expect a baptism when the Holy Spirit is sent to them.
- "baptized with the Holy Spirit", baptism a word full of power, not a tricle but a kind of deluge or tsunami of the Spirit, making waves, getting the attention of the city.

1:6–8

- The disciples' question of kingdom restoration to Israel is not directly answered. What is coming is beyond their expectations, not only for their people, but all people.
- They are also told that timelines are not for them to focus on.
- Acts defines, kingdom building as simply the sharing about Jesus under the power of his Spirit, so we must be mindful of what our own expectations of God's kingdom might be. Jesus is the central figure, the Spirit the primary mover and empowering presence, and the mission is to share about Jesus himself to all people.

1:9–11

- Jesus' being "taken up" into a cloud (his ascension) is often of interest, though we should focus mostly on what it means. Jesus is with God in a place of authority, his lifting up a further vindication and stamp of his authority.
- The angelic visitation assures not only of Jesus places and authority, but of his return. The disciples live now waiting for a return, though they will live without exactly timelines, but with a clear and full enough mission until then, as believers still do today.

Discussion Questions:

- A prologue is a key moment in the beginning of a literary work. What stands out about what Luke has chosen to highlight:
 - Assurance of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection.
 - Insistence from Jesus to "wait for the promised gift", the Holy Spirit's arrival which will bring power.
 - No timelines given, the disciples not to focus on it.
 - A mission to "ends of the earth" made clear, under the *power* of the Spirit.
- How does Acts 1:1–11 shape and even challenge what we tend to focus on as believers today? What about *then* do we need to hear clearly still *now*?
- What in Acts 1:1–11 informs you, comforts you, or challenges you?