

THE EARLY CHURCH IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

The Council of Jerusalem
& 2nd Missionary Journey Lecture

Lakeside Institute of Theology
Ross Arnold, Summer 2013

Early Church in the Book of Acts (NT4)

1. Introduction To the Book of Acts
2. *No Class*
3. The Birth of the Church
4. Persecution and Expansion
5. Conversion of the Gentiles
6. Council of Jerusalem & 2nd Missionary Journey
7. Further Outreach to the West
8. Trials and Witness of Paul; Final Exam

The Acts of the Apostles

- Author: Luke, companion of Paul
- Date: c. AD 62-69
- Theme: Written by a Gentile, Acts tells the story of the Early Church and its growth, especially through the work of the Holy Spirit & the ministries of Peter and Paul.
- Purpose: To show the Old Testament promises of God are fulfilled, and that Jesus was and is the Messiah, as shown in the miraculous way God blesses and expands the Church.
- Outline:
 - *Witness in Jerusalem (1:1-8:4)
 - *Witness in Judea & Samaria (8:5-12:25)
 - *Witness to Ends of the Earth (13:1- 28:31)



The Question of Gentile Believers

Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.” ² This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. ³ The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the believers very glad. ⁴ When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them.

⁵ Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, “The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses.”

Acts 15:1-5

The Council in Jerusalem

The apostles and elders met to consider this question. ⁷ After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: “Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. ⁸ God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. ⁹ He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? ¹¹ No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

¹² The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them.

Acts 15:6-12

James Addresses the Council

When they finished, James spoke up. “Brothers,” he said, “listen to me. ¹⁴ Simon has described to us how God first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles. ¹⁵ The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

¹⁶ “‘After this I will return and rebuild David’s fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, ¹⁷ that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things’—¹⁸ things known from long ago.

¹⁹ “It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. ²⁰ Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. ²¹ For the law of Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.”

Acts 15:13-21

The Letter from the Council

Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, men who were leaders among the believers. ²³ With them they sent the following letter:

The apostles and elders, your brothers,

To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia:

Greetings. ²⁴ We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. ²⁵ So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— ²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. ²⁸ It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: ²⁹ You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.

Acts 15:22-29

Reporting Back to Antioch

So the men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. ³¹ The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message. ³² Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers. ³³ After spending some time there, they were sent off by the believers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. ^[34] ³⁵ But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.

Acts 15:30-35

Paul and Barnabas Part Ways

Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.” ³⁷ Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, ³⁸ but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. ³⁹ They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹ He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Acts 15:36-41

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Paul came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was Jewish and a believer but whose father was a Greek.² The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him.³ Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.⁴ As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey.⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

Acts 16:1-5



Paul Crosses Asia Minor

Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹ During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” ¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Acts 16:6-10







ΕΓΝΑΤΙΑ ΟΔΟΣ

VIA EGNATIA

Paul Enters Europe; To Philippi

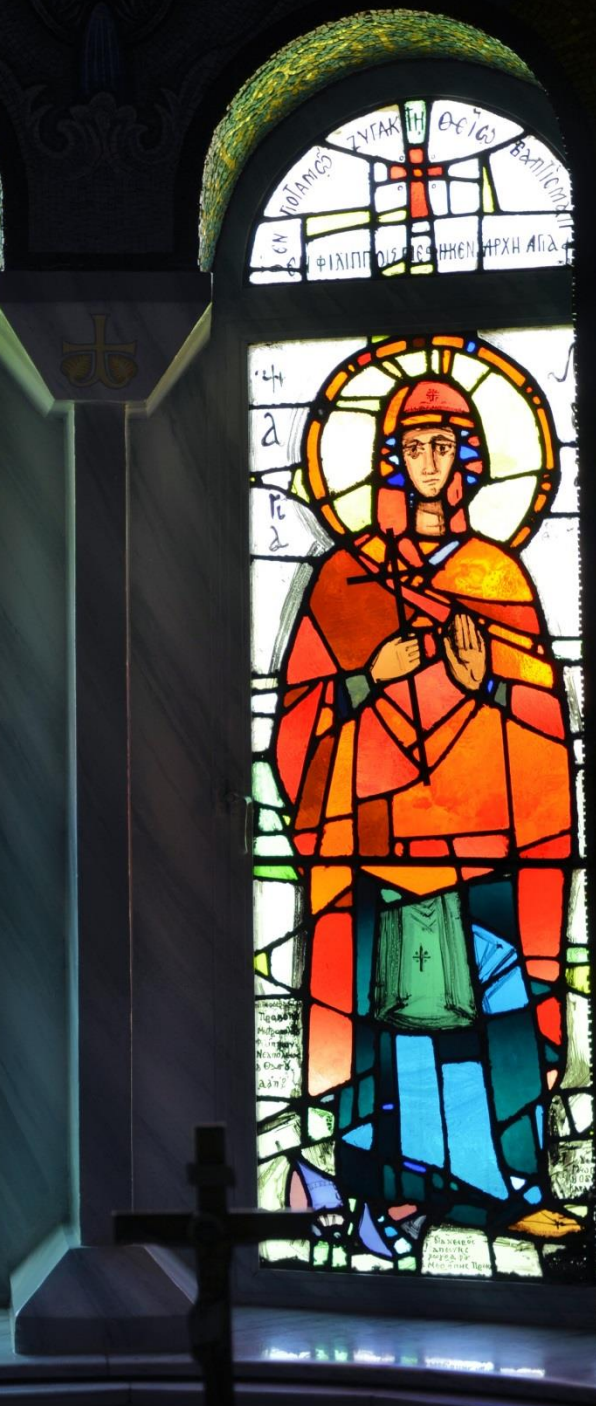
From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. ¹² From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

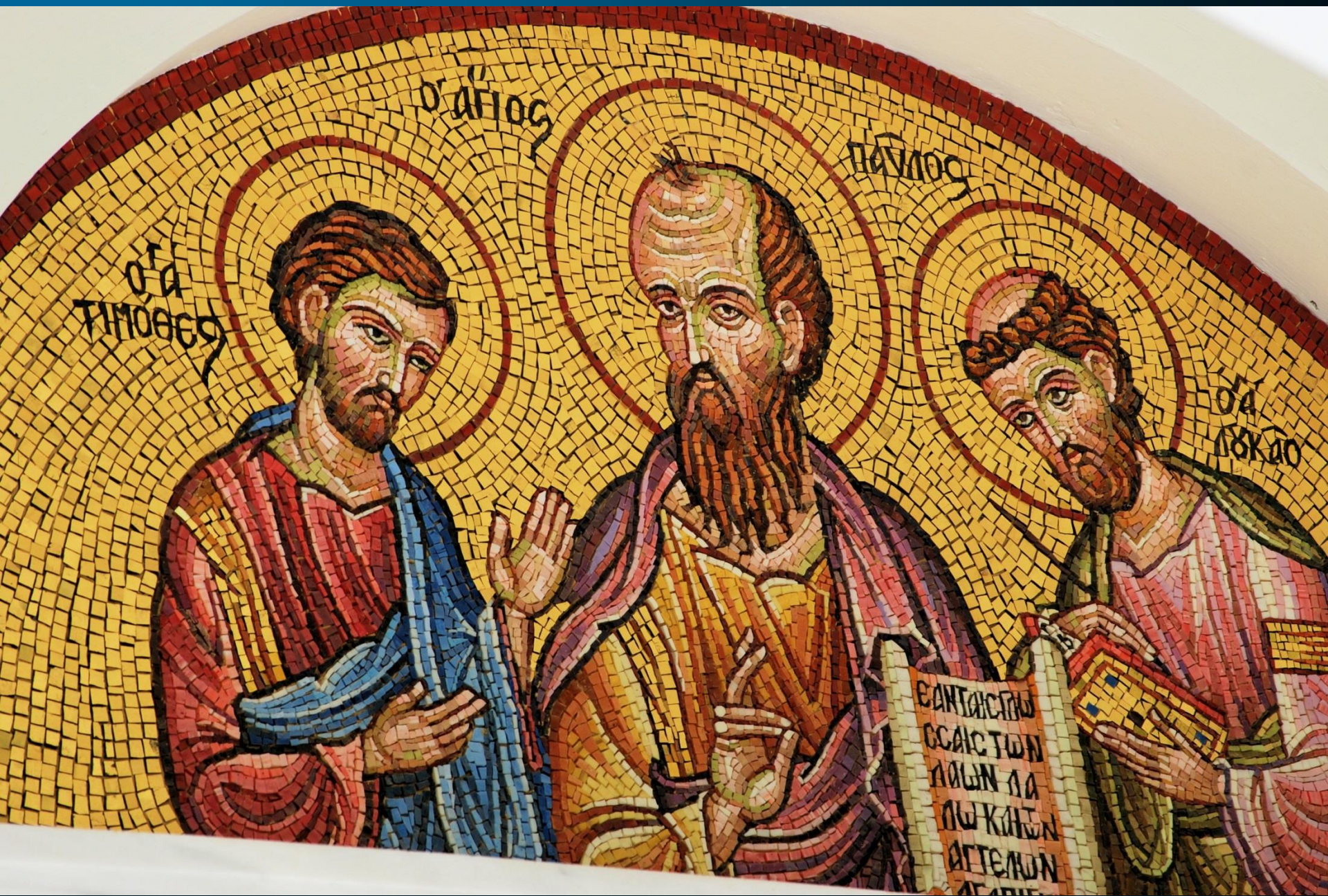
¹³ On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

Acts 16:11-15









ὁ ἅγιος
ΤΙΜΟΘΕΟΣ

ὁ ἅγιος

ΠΑΥΛΟΣ

ὁ ἅγιος
ΜΑΡΚΟΣ

ΕΑΝΤΙΣΤΩ
ΟΡΑΙΣΤΩΝ
ΛΩΝ ΛΑ
ΠΩΚΗΤΩΝ
ΑΓΓΕΛΩΝ
ΑΓΓΕΛΩΝ

Paul & Silas Arrested

Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. ¹⁷ She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." ¹⁸ She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.

¹⁹ When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. ²⁰ They brought them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar ²¹ by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."

²² The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. ²³ After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. ²⁴ When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

Acts 16:16-24



ΙΦΥΛΑΚΗ ΑΓ. ΠΑΥΛΟΥ
PRISON ST' PAUL



Salvation for the Philippian Jailer & His Family

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. ²⁷ The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. ³⁴ The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.

Acts 16:25-34



A Parade from Prison

When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: “Release those men.” ³⁶ The jailer told Paul, “The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace.”

³⁷ But Paul said to the officers: “They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out.”

³⁸ The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. ³⁹ They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city. ⁴⁰ After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them. Then they left.

Acts 16:35-40



A Better Reception

As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. ¹² As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

¹³ But when the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, some of them went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up. ¹⁴ The believers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea. ¹⁵ Those who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.

Acts 17:10-15

Trouble in Thessalonica

When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ² As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah,” he said. ⁴ Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women.

⁵ But other Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason’s house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd. ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, ⁷ and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.” ⁸ When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. ⁹ Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

Acts 17:1-9

Outline of the Book of Acts

I. The Witness in Jerusalem (1:1-8:4)

A. The Power of the Church (1:1-2:47)

1. Prologue to Acts (1:1,2)
2. Appearance of the Resurrected Christ (1:3-8)
3. Ascension of Christ (1:9-11)
4. Anticipation of the Spirit (1:12-14)
5. Appointment of Matthias (1:15-26)
6. Filling With the Holy Spirit (2:1-4)
7. Speaking With Other Tongues (2:5-13)
8. Peter Explains Pentecost (2:14-41)
9. Practices of the Early Church (2:42-47)

Outline of the Book of Acts

I. The Witness in Jerusalem (3:1-8:4)

B. The Progress of the Church (3:1-8:4)

1. Peter Heals the Lame Man (3:1-11)
2. Peter's Second Sermon (3:12-26)
3. Peter and John Are Arrested (4:1-4)
4. Peter Preaches to the Sanhedrin (4:5-12)
5. Sanhedrin Commands Peter Not to Preach (4:13-22)
6. Apostles' Prayer for Boldness (4:23-31)
7. Early Church Voluntarily Shares (4:32-37)
8. Ananias and Sapphira Lie (5:1-11)
9. Apostles Mighty Miracles (5:12-16)
10. Apostles' Persecution (5:17-42)
11. Deacons Are Appointed (6:1-8)
12. Stephen is Martyred (6:9-7:60)
13. Saul Persecutes the Church (8:1-4)

Outline of the Book of Acts

II. The Witness in Judea and Samaria (8:5-12:25)

A. The Witness of Philip (8:5-40)

B. The Conversion of Saul (9:1-31)

1. Saul is Converted and Blinded (9:1-9)

2. Saul is Filled with the Spirit (9:10-19)

3. Saul Preaches at Damascus (9:20-22)

4. Saul Witnesses in Jerusalem (9:23-31)

C. The Witness of Peter (9:32-11:18)

D. The Witness of the Early Church (11:19-12:25)

1. The Witness of the Antioch Church (11:19-30)

2. The Persecution of Herod (12:1-25)

Outline of the Book of Acts

III. The Witness to the Ends of the Earth (13:1-28:31)

A. Paul's 1st Missionary Journey (13:1-14:28)

1. Barnabas and Paul Sent from Antioch (13:1-3)
2. Ministry at Cyprus (13:4-13)
3. Ministry at Antioch (13:14-50)
4. Ministry at Iconium (13:51-14:5)
5. Ministry at Lystra (14:6-20)
6. Ministry on the Return Trip (14:21-25)
7. Report on the 1st Journey (14:26-28)

B. The Jerusalem Council (15:1-35)

C. The 2nd Missionary Journey (15:36-18:22)

1. Contention Over John Mark (15:36-41)
2. Derbe and Lystra (16:1-5)
3. Troas: Macedonian Call (16:6-10)
4. Philippi: Extensive Ministry (16:11-40)
5. Thessalonica (17:1-9)
6. Berea: Many Receive the Word (17:10-15)
7. Athens (17:16-34)
8. Corinth (18:1-17)
9. Return Trip to Antioch (18:18-22)

Outline of the Book of Acts

III. The Witness to the Ends of the Earth (13:1-28:31)

D. Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey (18:23-21:16)

1. Galatia and Phrygia (18:23)
2. Ephesus: Three Years of Ministry (18:24-19:41)
3. Macedonia (20:1-5)
4. Troas: Eutychus Falls from Loft (20:6-12)
5. Miletus: Paul Bids Farewell (20:13-38)
6. Tyre: Paul is Warned (21:1-6)
7. Caesarea: Agabus Prediction (21:7-16)

E. The Trip to Rome (21:17-28:31)

1. Paul Witness in Jerusalem (21:17-23:33)
2. Paul Witnesses in Caesarea (23:34-26:32)
3. Paul Witnesses in Rome (27:1-28:31)