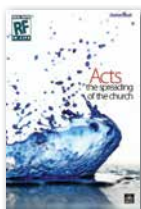


## In the Beginning . . .

We often call Genesis the book of beginnings, but Acts is a book of beginnings too. Acts is an important book of the Bible because it tells us how the church began. It's also an exciting book with its accounts of miracles, mobs, and mishaps. Prepare to be challenged by this quarter's study of the birth and growth of the church as recorded in Acts.



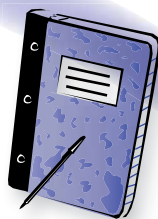
**The Real Faith in Life Devotional Bible Study** is designed to help you dig into God's Word. Each lesson offers devotions for Monday through Saturday, along with an In-Class worksheet to be completed during your group study.

In order for you to gain the most out of your devotional time, use the following tools along with your student book.



**Bible study tools:** In order for you to dig into God's Word, consider using a Bible dictionary and a concordance.

If you are not familiar with these helpful guides, ask your pastor or youth leader for a recommendation.



**Journal:** Purchase a journal or notebook to record your personal thoughts and prayers. Bring your journal and student book to class each week so that you can take notes during the

lesson or write any special insights you gain from a particular activity. You may also use the journal for sermon notes or for prayer requests.

Or visit an online Bible tools Web site, such as [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org).

This site offers commentaries, maps, and many other tools to help you in your Bible study. (This recommendation does not constitute a blanket endorsement by RBP.)

### Internet extras

Listen to the book of Acts streaming online:

<http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>

Download mp3 files of the book of Acts <http://www.audiotreasure.com/>

Interested in Bible geography? Download free Bible maps at [www.biblemapper.com](http://www.biblemapper.com).

Use this software to track the place you learn about in Acts.

## An Incredible Beginning

Have you ever tried to find your house on Google Maps? You can start with a satellite image of your entire city, and then zoom in for a close-up. That's how this quarter's study of the book of Acts will work. At times you'll step back far enough to see the big picture; at other times you'll zoom in on important details that will help you grow spiritually. Because the best way to understand a book is to read it, this week will conclude with a challenging project to read the entire book of Acts in just two hours.

### Memory Verse



*"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"*  
(Acts 1:8).

## Monday

The Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts were written by the same person—Luke—and both were addressed to the same person—Theophilus.

1. According to Colossians 4:14, what was Luke's occupation?

### Read Luke 1:1–4.

2. According to verse 2, where did Luke learn about the ministry of Christ?
3. Read Acts 20:4 and 5 and list the people Luke had access to for eyewitness accounts.



*Anytime in the book of Acts you see the pronoun "we," you know that Luke was traveling with Paul at that time.*

4. Read Acts 21:15–19. What other invaluable source of eyewitness knowledge did Luke have access to?
5. Compare Luke 1:4 with Acts 1:3. What was Luke's reason for writing these books and addressing them to Theophilus?
6. How would reading these two books give a Theophilus more certainty about what Jesus Christ did?



**Memory Verse Activity:** This week's memory verse, Acts 1:8 contains a concise outline of the book of Acts. As you memorize this key verse, think about its parallels in your life. Where is your Jerusalem (hometown)? Where is your Judea and Samaria (surrounding regions)? Where is your uttermost part of the earth? How willing are you to be spreading the gospel in these areas?

## Tuesday

### Read Acts 1:4–11.

1. Where were Jesus' disciples commanded to wait?
2. What were they to wait for?
3. What question did they have for Jesus?
4. What was Jesus' response?
5. What task did Jesus give them?
6. Using a pencil, mark a note in the margin of Acts 1: "The gospel spreads to Jerusalem: Acts 1—8."
7. Using a pencil, mark a note in the margin of Acts 9: "The gospel spreads to Palestine and Syria: Acts 9—12."



*"Judea and Samaria" mentioned in Acts 1:8 are "Palestine and Syria" on a modern map.*

8. Using a pencil, mark a note in the margin of Acts 13: "The gospel spreads to the world: Acts 13—28."
9. Describe the ascension of Christ.

# Wednesday

**Read Acts 1:12–26. While it seems like the procedure for selecting a new disciple was completely random, at closer glance, the disciples did four things to spiritually prepare for their decision. List the things they did, as described in the verses below.**

1. Verse 14

2. Verse 15

3. Verses 22 and 23

4. Verse 24

5. Read Proverbs 16:33. Who determines how the lot is cast?

6. Would you describe the selection process as “random” or “purposeful”? Why?



*While lot casting is mentioned in Old Testament times quite frequently, this account in Acts 1 is the last time it was practiced in the New Testament.*

7. How do we determine the will of God today?

# Thursday

1. According to Acts 1:5, what (exactly) would happen “not many days hence”?
2. Read Acts 2:1–13 and describe the fulfillment of this promise.
3. Read Acts 11:15 and 16, Romans 6:3, and 1 Corinthians 12:13. What phrase is used in each passage to describe the ministry of the Holy Spirit?
4. According to these verses, is this a one-time event for each person or the sort of thing that happens many times in a person’s life? How do you know?
5. Read Acts 2:4 and notice that a different phrase is used to describe another ministry of the Holy Spirit. What is it?



*Bible scholars recognize that these two phrases describe two different works of the Holy Spirit.*

**This phrase is also used several times in Acts. Read Acts 4:8; 6:3-5, 7:55, and 9:17.**

6. According to these verses, is this a one-time event for each person, or the sort of thing that happens many times in a person’s life? How do you know?



*Remember this rule: Believers experience baptism of the Spirit once, at the point of salvation. Believers may be filled with the Spirit many times.*

# Friday

## Read Acts 2:1–12.

1. What miraculous, visible thing occurred when the Holy Spirit baptized the believers at Pentecost?
2. According to Acts 2:13, what theory did some people use to explain this supernatural phenomenon?

## Read Acts 2:14–36, Peter's answer to the confused and curious bystanders.

3. What practical reason did he give to refute the onlookers' accusation?



*Peter quoted from Joel 2:28–32, a passage that describes the visible signs of the outpouring of the Spirit. He used this passage to link the tongues-speaking with the work of the Spirit.*

4. What events mentioned in Acts 2:17–21 were *not* occurring at Pentecost?



*Joel 2:28–32 was not fulfilled at Pentecost. The fulfillment of this passage is yet future.*

5. What truth did Peter present about Jesus Christ (vv. 22–24, 31–35)?

6. What truth did Peter present about David (vv. 25–30)?

7. How do you think Peter's sermon might have affected his listeners?

# Saturday

## Read Acts 2:37–47.

1. What indication is there that the listeners were under conviction?
2. What indication is there that the listeners knew a response was necessary?
3. Acts 2:41-47 records at least nine ways that the congregation responded. List as many as you can find.
4. In what ways does a church congregation respond to sermons today?

## Bible Reading Challenge

You could read through book of Acts in about two hours! Considering that the book contains 24,246 words, and considering that an average person reads 200 words per minute, the book of Acts could be read in two hours—short enough to be completed on a quiet afternoon or evening.

## Bonus Project

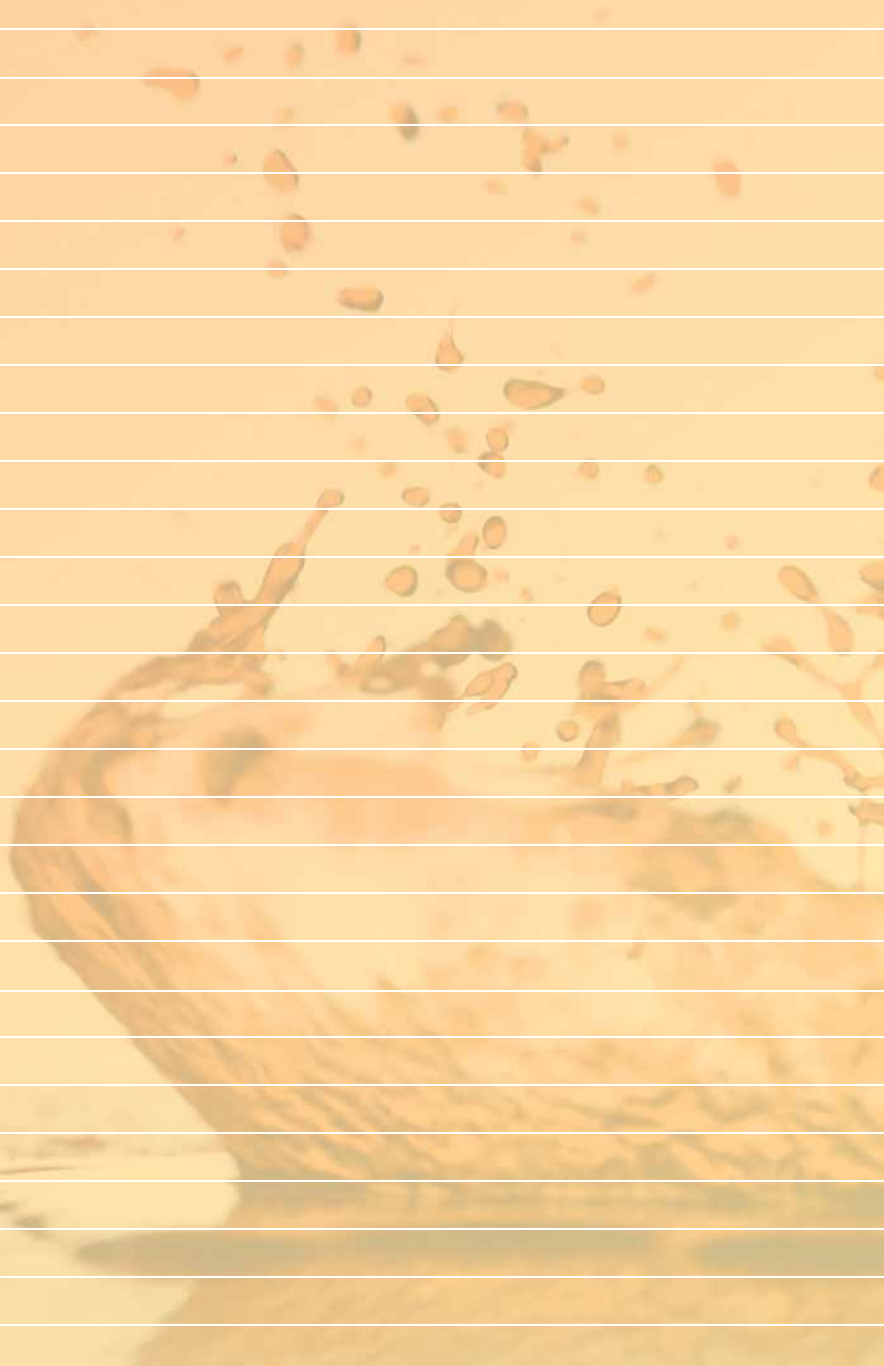
In order to understand Luke's entire historical record, read the book of Luke before reading the book of Acts. This will add another 25,939 words (and another two hours) to your project. Think of the gospel of Luke as Volume 1 and the book of Acts as Volume 2.



**The church grows when I understand what the gospel is.**

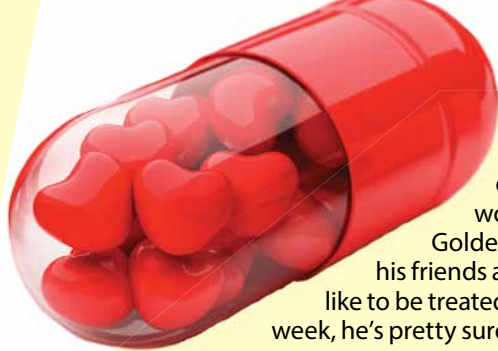


# Journal Notes



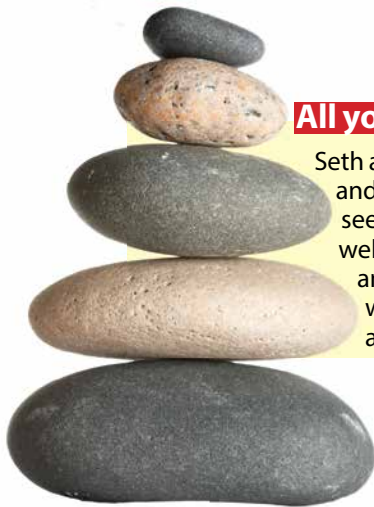


# Where's the Gospel?



## All you need is love:

Andy attends a church that emphasizes the moral and ethical teachings of Jesus. He works very hard to follow the Golden Rule, trying his best to treat his friends at school just the way he would like to be treated. Since he attends church every week, he's pretty sure he is a Christian.



## All you need is spirituality:

Seth and Molly sit next to each other in orchestra and sometimes talk about religion. They both seem to share the same values and get along well, even though one attends a Baptist church and the other is Jewish. "That's great if it works for you," they often say to each other at the end of their spiritual conversations.



## All you need is some down-to-earth advice:

Carla attends a youth group where the teaching is always practical. Each week, her youth pastor offers creative advice on topics like dating, college choice, and money management. Carla never seems to need her Bible at youth group—this bothers her mother—but Carla seems to be learning many life skills.

Each of the four imaginary scenes below presents a variation on the same problem: the gospel is not preached clearly. After reading each problem, suggest better ways to present the gospel.



## All you need is an incentive:

John loves his youth group. Every week he wins lots of prizes for memorizing verses, bringing friends to church, and helping old ladies across the church parking lot. Last week, his youth leader promised free ice cream to everyone who got saved. Now John is starting to question his own salvation . . . after all, he really likes ice cream.