



ACTS: The Spirit-Empowered Mission of the Church

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." – Acts 1:8

The Book of Acts doesn't end—it continues through us. Beginning with a resurrected Christ and concluding with Paul under house arrest, Acts records what Jesus *continues* to do through His Spirit in and through His people.

Why Acts Matters Today

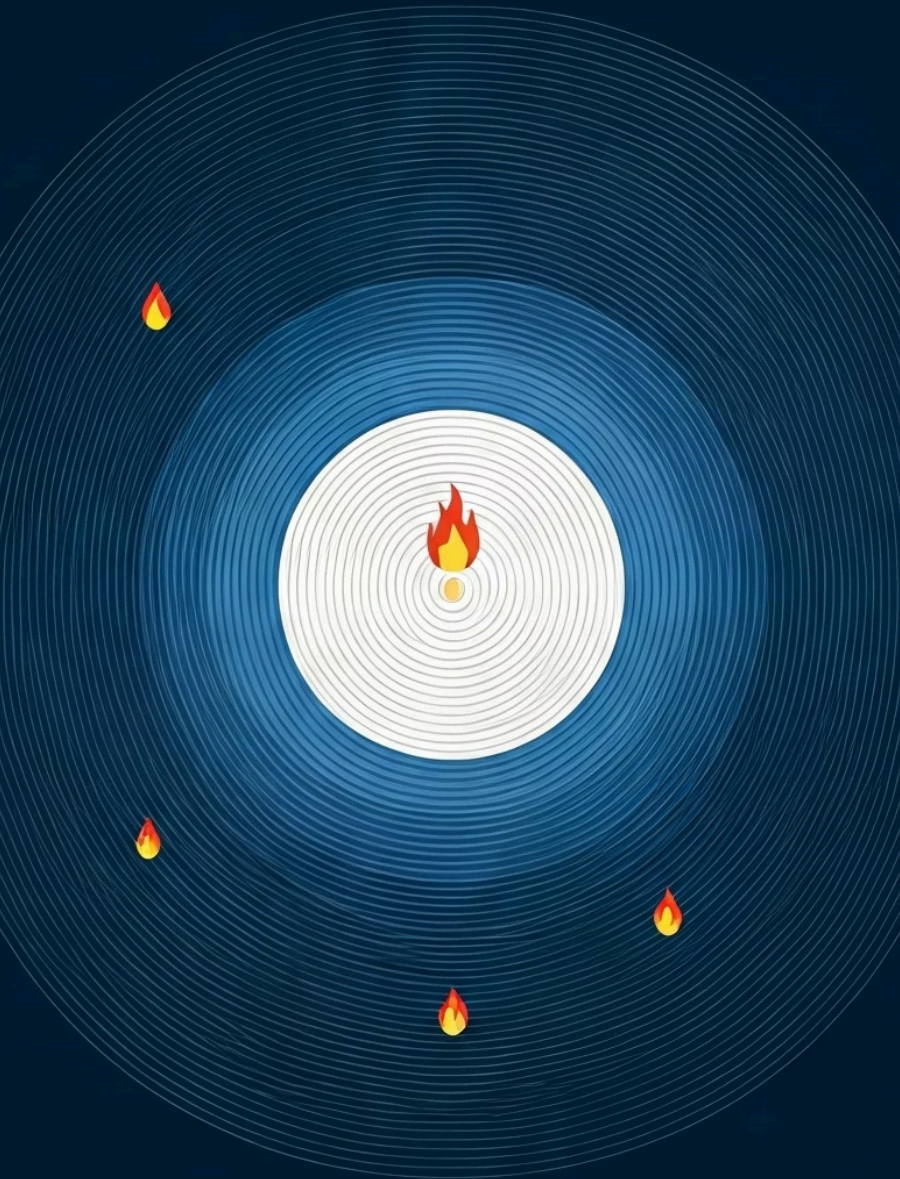
Acts is volume two of Luke's narrative—if his Gospel was about what Jesus **began** to do and teach, Acts reveals what He **continues** to do through Spirit-filled followers.

This isn't a memorial to a movement—it's the living record of a revolution that continues today. The early Church wasn't merely a religious institution but a Spirit-fueled Gospel movement advancing through broken people for God's glory.



Luke wrote to Theophilus, providing an orderly account of how the Gospel spread from Jerusalem to Rome—from a small group of Jewish believers to a worldwide movement that transcended cultural boundaries.

Acts 1:8 - The Divine Blueprint



1

Jerusalem

The Gospel first reaches the Jewish people in Jerusalem (Acts 1-7)

2

Judea & Samaria

The message crosses cultural barriers to reach neighboring regions (Acts 8-12)

3

Ends of the Earth

The Gospel expands to Gentiles across the Roman world (Acts 13-28)

This progression isn't merely geographic—it's *theological*. It reveals God's redemptive plan unfolding from Jews to Samaritans to Gentiles worldwide.

Pentecost: The Church is Born

The Promise Fulfilled

The disciples obeyed Jesus' command to wait in Jerusalem. Then suddenly, on Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended with power like wind and fire.

They spoke in languages they had never learned, and people "from every nation under heaven" heard the Gospel in their native tongue.



"We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" – Acts 2:11

Peter—the same disciple who had denied Jesus—stood up and preached Christ crucified and risen. Three thousand responded, and the Church was born.

Gospel Boldness Amid Persecution

Peter and John heal a man born lame at the temple gate. When arrested and threatened, their response was striking:

"We cannot help but speak of what we have seen and heard." - Acts 4:20

Rather than praying for protection, the early believers prayed for boldness. God answered so powerfully that "the place where they were meeting was shaken."



❓ **Reflection:** What if we prayed for boldness instead of comfort? How might God shake our world through a fearless Church?

Stephen: First Martyr of the Church

A Spirit-Filled Witness

- Stephen was "full of faith and the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5)
- Performed "great wonders and signs" (Acts 6:8)
- Spoke with wisdom his opponents "could not withstand" (Acts 6:10)

A Christ-Like Death

As stones were thrown,
Stephen:

- Saw "heaven opened and Jesus standing at God's right hand" (Acts 7:56)
- Prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59)
- Asked, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (Acts 7:60)

Stephen's martyrdom triggered the persecution that scattered believers—and spread the Gospel beyond Jerusalem.



The Gospel Breaks Barriers

1

Philip in Samaria

The Gospel crosses ethnic barriers as Samaritans—long despised by Jews—receive Christ (Acts 8:4-25)

2

Ethiopian Eunuch

Philip explains Isaiah's prophecy about Jesus to an Ethiopian official, who believes and is baptized immediately (Acts 8:26-40)

3

Saul's Conversion

The church's greatest persecutor encounters Jesus on the Damascus Road and becomes its greatest missionary (Acts 9:1-31)

4

Cornelius

Peter witnesses the Holy Spirit fall on Gentiles, opening the door for the Gospel to reach all nations without cultural restrictions (Acts 10)

The Gospel doesn't stop where our preferences end—it moves where the Spirit leads.



The Mission Expands: Paul's Journeys

1 — First Journey

Cyprus and Asia Minor (Acts 13-14)

- Sent by Antioch church
- Synagogues first, then Gentiles

2 — Second Journey

Greece and Macedonia (Acts 15:36-18:22)

- Churches strengthened
- Gospel enters Europe

3 — Third Journey

Ephesus focus (Acts 18:23-21:16)

- Three years in Ephesus
- Riot in theater

Paul contextualized the Gospel: he reasoned from Scripture with Jews and quoted Greek poets with Athenians. The message remained unchanged, but methods adapted to reach different audiences.



Chains Cannot Stop God's Word



Paul's Final Journey

- Arrested in Jerusalem (Acts 21)
- Testifies before governors Felix and Festus (Acts 24-25)
- Shares his testimony with King Agrippa (Acts 26)
- Survives shipwreck en route to Rome (Acts 27)
- Ministers under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28)

"Paul lived there two whole years... proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance." - Acts 28:30-31



Acts 29: The Story Continues With Us

1

Spirit

The same Holy Spirit who empowered the apostles dwells in every believer today.

1

Mission

The Great Commission remains our mandate—to make disciples of all nations.

1

Message

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is still the power of God for salvation to all who believe.

We are not called to be [passive admirers](#) of the early church, but [active participants](#) in what God's Spirit continues to do through His people.

Lay down your comfort. Pick up your cross. Speak the Gospel boldly. Live like the Spirit of the living God has filled you—because if you're in Christ, He has.