

Episode #1106 Acts 1 Part 1-To Every God-Lover

I. Acts is unique in the New Testament. Rather than the ministry of Jesus Christ on earth, it focuses on what came after, when the Lord had ascended back into heaven. The Lord left His disciples with many commands to carry out, and Acts tells us how they did them.

II. Introduction – Verses 1-4.

- A. Acts 1:1. Luke ties this account back to the book of Luke, which was written regarding what the Lord Jesus began to do and teach. It was not complete, for it did not finish recording His work at that time. Acts will record the continuation of that work through the apostles who represented Him. These apostles were doing the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not just their words, but also their very works were inspired. Romans 15:18-19. Christ was revealed not just through Paul's words, but also through his acts. This was true of all the apostles.
- B. Luke dedicates his book to *Theophilus*, meaning "beloved friend of God." *Theos* in Greek means God, *philus* is related to *philo* = Greek for "friendship-love." If we too seek to be friends of God, we need to learn and believe the things written in this book.
- C. Account in Greek is *logos*, the same word used to tell us that the Lord Jesus is the "Word" in John. This book is the written Word, and Jesus Christ is the living Word.
- D. Verse 2. Luke's former account had stopped at the day in which He was taken up. Luke 24. In the first few verses, the Holy Spirit reviews to bring out some new facts that will help to set up what comes later in Acts. The Lord Jesus had given His commandments to the apostles through the Holy Spirit.

III. The name of "The Holy Spirit" in Greek.

- A. In English we have just one phrase, "the Holy Spirit." This is a translation of four different phrases in Greek.
 - 1. Holy Spirit
 - 2. Spirit Holy
 - 3. the Holy the Spirit
 - 4. the Spirit the Holy
- B. First, in English adjectives always are supposed to come before the noun ("red ball," not "ball red"). In Greek there is no set order. Writers were free to put these words in whatever order they chose. They would put first the word they wanted to emphasize. In the phrase, "the Spirit the Holy," we have the idea "the SPIRIT, the holy (one)." This is the more common phrase in Greek. When the author wanted to emphasize His holiness, we would have "Holy Spirit," as if he was saying "the HOLY Spirit."
- C. The second part is dependent upon whether the word "the" is used or not: "the Holy the Spirit" or "Holy Spirit," and "the Spirit the Holy" or "Spirit Holy." In Greek, whether or not the "the"s are used is up to the author in most cases. The phrases with the word "the" included emphasize the PERSON of the Holy Spirit, and the phrases without the word "the" emphasize the POWER of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, when He appears most plainly distinct from the other parts of God, has to do always with His power and work. He is the Giver, and He is associated with His gifts. When the phrase is "the Spirit the Holy," the Giver is emphasized, whereas when the phrase is "spirit holy," the gift is emphasized. "Holy Spirit," without the "the"s present means "holy power," although that power is always connected back to the person of the Holy Spirit Who gave it. That goes the other way too, and the Person of the Holy

Spirit must always be associated with His power and work. (Note: sometimes there is only one “the,” such as “the Holy Spirit” or “the Spirit Holy.” This means the same as with two “the”s, the Giver not the gifts.)

- D. Back to Acts 1:2. The phrase is “spirit holy,” and the Lord had given these commandments through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus gave these commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen. Needless to say, this word “apostles” is going to be a crucial one as we study through the book of Acts.

IV. The meaning of “apostle” in Greek.

- A. Greek *apostolos* is translated apostle. This means a “sent one,” connected to the Greek verb *apostello*, which means sent. But there is another word for sending, *pempo*, which means a simple sending. The word *apostello* means more than *pempo*.
- B. An *apostello* sending is a sending with power or authority. If I were to give you the money to go to Cambodia on a vacation, I would be sending you there. The Greeks would call this a *pempo* sending. Yet if the President of the United States should send you to Cambodia as the U.S. ambassador, that too would be a sending, but a far different sending than giving the money for a vacation. The President would be sending you with authority, and his office and power would be behind it. The Greeks would call this an *apostello* sending, meaning a commissioning or a sending with authority.
- C. One who was sent with authority was an apostle. Being an apostle thus was not a title that you had, like “president” or “CEO” or “pastor.” It was not an office that you held, but rather a job that you did. Your commissioning could be for a long period of time, or it could be for a short period of time. You could be sent to do many things, or you could be sent to do one thing.
- D. Back to Acts 1:2. These apostles were the ones He had chosen to commission with His authority to do His work on His behalf. Chosen is in Greek *eklegomai*, which is sometimes translated as “elected.” These men were elected by the Lord Jesus to perform the special service which He had called them to. Elected does not have to do with being elected for salvation. It has to do with those who already believe, and they are elected for service.

V. The Lord commands His apostles. Acts 1:2-5.

- A. Verse 3. His disciples were well aware of this suffering. John had even seen the Lord die upon the cross. Yet these same men saw the Lord Jesus alive, and many infallible proofs were given them of this fact. These were not men who could have been fooled about the Lord’s death, nor be fooled by one only claiming to be Jesus Christ. These men knew the Lord, and His appearance to them was indisputable proof that He had indeed risen from the dead.
- B. The Lord was seen by His disciples during forty days. We know from other passages (John 20:26) that He was not with them constantly, but was seen by them during this period.

VI. Conclusion: Luke’s books were written to a “God-lover.” Luke was about what Jesus BEGAN. Now Acts is about how that work continued. He chose apostles, men commissioned with His authority. He gave them commandments through the power of the Holy Spirit. He proved to them His resurrection, and instructed them what to do once He left them. These are the apostles whose acts we are about to follow.