

- Last week we looked at the last eight chapters of the book of John. We talked about how John records Jesus' teachings extensively and then looked at how John also records a prayer Christ said which appears in no other Gospel account. Finally, we concluded our study of the Gospel account John writes by looking at how he records the events surrounding Christ's betrayal, arrest, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection. We especially emphasized John's stated reason for writing the book.
- Today we are going to start our study of the book of Acts. We will start by looking what the book is about and who wrote it. We will look specifically at the first two chapters in the book of Acts, including Christ's instructions to the apostles, His ascension to heaven, the events surrounding what we call the day of Pentecost, and the way the first Christians engaged in fellowship with one another.
- First, Luke, the author of the book of Acts, identifies himself. We know that it is Luke because he named a man named Theophilus as the person to whom he wrote that book (Luke 1:1). He mentions that same person as the person that to whom the book of Acts is written (Acts 1:1)
- Jesus tells His apostles to stay in Jerusalem until they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:2-5)
- Remember that Christ had instructed His apostles to go into all the world. (Matthew 28:16-20)
- Recall from our last lesson that the Holy Spirit was promised by Jesus as a "helper" for the apostles. (John 14:15-30)
- Christ tells His apostles that they will be witnesses of Him everywhere. Then He ascends to heaven. The apostles then see two men appear who ask them what they are looking at and telling them that Christ will come again in the same way He ascended. (Acts 1:6-11)
- The apostles then gather in one place with about 120 people. Jesus's brothers are referred to here, but we only know of one brother of Christ, James. But remember that Jesus had said on the cross to John that he should be like a son to his mother Mary (John 19:26) so arguably Luke could be talking about John. In any case, they needed to replace Judas Iscariot who betrayed Christ then committed suicide. This was done to fulfill Psalms 109:8 which said someone else would take his office. So, two men were nominated for that role, a man called Joseph and a man called Matthias. The apostles prayed that God would help show the right person from these two, then they "cast lots" (something like 'drawing straws') and the chosen person was Matthias. (Acts 1:12-26)
- When a certain day called Pentecost arrived (a Jewish religious holiday called the Feast of Weeks in Hebrew), the Greek word was Pentecost, the Holy Spirit finally comes on the apostles and there is a sound "like a mighty rushing wind" and "divided tongues of fire" sit on top of them. (Acts 2:1-3)
- Immediately the apostles start speaking other languages. Several different groups (as many as 15) are all hearing them in their native language. They accuse the disciples of

being drunk (although this makes little sense if you think about it). (Acts 2:4-12) Notice that the “tongues” that they are speaking in are intelligible and rational, they are not babbling.

- Peter then stands up and speaks what we call today the first Gospel Sermon. He first says that these people are not drunk (especially seeing how it is morning) and that what they are witnessing is what the prophet Joel wrote about (Joel 2:28-32) being fulfilled. (Acts 2:14-21)
- Peter notes that David (who was revered by the Jews) was a man who died but Christ did not, and he ascended to heaven to be at the right hand of God. He even quotes David (Psalms 110:1) as saying that Jesus would ascend. (Acts 2:29-35).
- Peter concluded his remarks by noting that Jesus was indeed the Son of God and the Jews had crucified Him. (Acts 2:36)
- Many Jews were convinced by Peter’s words and asked Him what they should do to remedy this situation. Peter tells them that they need to repent and be baptized (it is notable that Peter told them that they had to be baptized). About 3,000 people obeyed. (Acts 2:37-41)
- Those who believed continued to worship and commune with each other in people’s homes. They were even living communally, supporting each other. (Acts 2:42-47).

1. Who writes the book of Acts and to whom is it written?
2. What did Jesus command his apostles to do?
3. What did Jesus tell his disciples to do after that?
4. What is another name given for Holy Spirit?
5. How many people were present when a new apostle was selected?
6. How did the vacancy among the apostles get created?
7. Who was selected as the new apostle?
8. What events immediately preceded the gift of the Holy Spirit to the apostles?
9. What do the disciples do when they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?
10. When the apostles do this act, of what are they accused?
11. How does Peter defend the apostles against this accusation?
12. What old Testament prophet does Peter quote to show what was really happening?
13. How does Peter compare Christ and David?
14. What does Peter say the Jews had done to the Son of God?
15. How does Peter say the Jews should do if they realized that Jesus was Christ?
16. How many people obeyed Peter’s call?
17. How did the earliest Christians behave?