

Acts Part 1
Leader Guide
(NASB and ESV)

JESUS' WITNESSES
EMPOWERED BY
HIS SPIRIT
(CHAPTERS 1–12)

Acts Part 1 Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)

© 2014, 2021 Precept

Chattanooga, Tennessee 37422

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Printed in the U.S.A.

Unless otherwise noted Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible®

© The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995.

Used by permission. www.lockman.org

Scripture quotations marked ESV are taken from ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®)

© 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

2nd edition (4/2021)

USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

Using the Leader Guide with In & Out


When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

PRINTED PAGE NO.	L E S S O N S	PDF PAGE NO.
1	LESSON ONE: Acts 1	5
9	LESSON TWO: Acts 2	13
17	LESSON THREE: Acts 3:1–4:31	21
23	LESSON FOUR: Acts 4:32–5	27
31	LESSON FIVE: Acts 6–7	35
37	LESSON SIX: Acts 8	41
43	LESSON SEVEN: Acts 9	47
49	LESSON EIGHT: Acts 10–12	53

To locate a particular lesson in the pdf, click on  in the grey bar on the left side of the window. Bookmarks will appear for each of the lessons. Select the lesson you need.

**ACTS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 1**

Lesson emphasis:

- **Acts 1**

To begin this discussion, you might ask your group what they learned about the connection between Acts and Luke.

Acts 1:1-2 and Luke 1:1-4

Both were written by the same author, believed to be Luke.
Both were written to a man named Theophilus.

Luke was the first account / narrative about Jesus and Acts is the second about what happened after Jesus was taken up to heaven.

Ask what they learned about the man Luke from the cross-references in this lesson.

Colossians 4:14

He was with Paul when he wrote this letter. Luke was the beloved physician.

2 Timothy 4:11

He was with Paul as he wrote his last letter.

Philemon 24

Luke was a fellow worker with Paul and others.

NOTE: Paul wrote Colossians and Philemon from prison in Rome—the imprisonment at the end of Acts. He wrote 2 Timothy from his last imprisonment, also in Rome. This is for your information, as the leader. You don't need to bring it up, but be aware in case someone else does.

ACTS 1

Tell your group to look at the characters chart in the lesson for a visual aid as they discuss this chapter.

You could also draw a timeline as you go to help your group understand the main points of the timing. See the end of this lesson's guide.

Verses 1-8

Who and what are verses 1-5 about? What are the facts?

Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles for 40 days after His suffering and resurrection.

He showed them many convincing proofs / proofs, evidently of who He was and the fact that He had risen from the dead.

He spoke to them about the kingdom of God.

When they were all together, He commanded / ordered them:
not to leave Jerusalem,
but to wait for the Father's promise,
which they had heard from Jesus.

The promise was that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit.
Jesus contrasted this baptism with John's baptism of water.

It would take place not many days from when Jesus said this.

What is the question and answer in verses 6-8? Discuss the cross-references.

The apostles asked Jesus if that was the time when He was restoring the kingdom to Israel. It was a reasonable question because of what verse 3 says He spoke to them about during the 40 days.

His answer was that they didn't need to know that yet.
All they needed to know was that the Father has fixed the times and epochs / seasons.

Luke 22:28-30

Jesus spoke a lot about the kingdom of God. He told the twelve His Father had granted / assigned Him a kingdom. He said they would eat at His table in His kingdom and sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

NOTE: Judas was not one of the twelve to receive this promise as he wasn't a believer. The end of Acts 1 says Matthias completed the twelve.

Matthew 25:31

Jesus the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne when He returns at His second coming. He's the King of God's everlasting kingdom.

Jesus' answer in Acts 1:7-8 focused on what was about to happen to them—when the Holy Spirit came on them, as He said in verse 5.

When they were baptized with the Holy Spirit, when He came on them:

They would receive power and be Jesus' witnesses

In Jerusalem

In Judea and Samaria

Even to the remotest part of the earth (ESV—to the end of the earth)

As a visual aid, you might list the two synonymous phrases:

baptized with the Holy Spirit
Holy Spirit comes upon you

Tell your group to look at the “Map of Israel” as a visual aid for this part of the discussion.

At this point, ask about the cross-references on the Holy Spirit and the definition of “baptized.”

Luke 24:44-53

When Jesus appeared to the disciples on the day of His resurrection, He told them about the promise of the Father. He said they would be clothed with power from on high. Compare this with Acts 1:4-8.

Luke 3:15-17

John the Baptist said one was coming who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. Jesus is who John referred to; compare this with Acts 1:5.

baptized—*baptizō*—“to immerse, submerge...to overwhelm”¹

Fire in this passage refers to the unquenchable fire of judgment. Those who are not baptized with the Holy Spirit will be baptized with fire at Jesus’ second coming.

John 7:37-39

Jesus spoke of the coming Holy Spirit. All who believe in Him receive His Spirit. But the Spirit wasn’t given until Jesus was glorified. His glorification wasn’t complete until He ascended to the Father.

John 14:1-3, 16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:7-14

Jesus, shortly before His death, told the apostles He was going away and the Holy Spirit was coming. He told them about the Holy Spirit:

Another Helper sent from the Father in Jesus’ name
With them forever
The Spirit of truth, guide into the truth
Would be in them
Teach them all things
Bring to their remembrance all Jesus said
Testify / bear witness about Jesus—compare this with Acts 1:8
Not come until Jesus goes away, back to the Father
Glorify Jesus

Ask what your group learned about power, witnesses, and promise from Acts 1:8 and the related word studies and cross-references.

Acts 1:8

The Holy Spirit empowers believers to be Jesus’ witnesses.

¹James Strong, *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon* (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995), G907.

This began in Jerusalem and spread to the remotest part / the end of the earth.
Believers are still empowered by His Spirit to be His witnesses.

power—*dúnamis*—“inherent power”²; “all the words derived from the stem *dúna-* have the meaning of being able, capable.”³

witnesses—*mártus*—“one who testifies”⁴; “one who declares facts directly known to himself”⁵

Luke 24:45-49

Jesus opened His disciples’ minds to understand the Scriptures, specifically about His suffering and resurrection. He told them about repentance for forgiveness proclaimed to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem.

He said they were the witnesses—the ones who heard and saw—of His death and resurrection. Then He said He would send the Father’s promise on them. They were to stay in Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high.

This is the same thing Jesus told them about in Acts 1.

Isaiah 49:6

This is a prophecy about Jesus being the one to restore / bring back Israel and be a light of salvation to the end of the earth, to the nations. In Acts 1, He commissioned His apostles to do this.

Matthew 28:16-20

This also refers to Jesus sending His apostles to all nations, making disciples of others.

Revelation 5:6-10

The Lamb is Jesus. He is connected with the seven Spirits of God sent into all the earth. He was slain and purchased / ransomed with His blood men from every tribe, tongue / language, people, and nation. He made them a kingdom and priests to God. They’ll reign on earth.

This is referring to the time when the kingdom is restored by the King.

In the lesson at the end of Day Three, there is a question which you should ask your group. What happens between Jesus’ ascension to heaven and His return to earth? Give them time to discuss how this relates to them.

²James Strong, *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon* (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995), G1411.

³Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993), G1411.

⁴Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), p. 417.

⁵Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, Baker’s Greek New Testament Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), p. 254.

Verses 9-11

What happened? Also discuss cross-references.

Jesus was lifted up and received into heaven as the eleven apostles watched.
Two men, most likely angels, said Jesus will come in the same way as He went into heaven.

He was lifted up.
A cloud received / took Him out of their sight into heaven.

Luke 21:27

The Son of Man will come in a cloud with power and great glory.

Mark 14:60-62

Jesus is seated at the right hand of Power. He'll come with the clouds of heaven.

John 14:2-3

He went to prepare a place for His disciples, His followers, believers.

Ephesians 1:20-21

He is now seated at God's right hand in the heavenly places far above all other rule, authority, power, and dominion.

Romans 8:34

And from there He intercedes for believers.

Give time for your group to discuss application.

Lead the discussion back to Acts 1:11. What was the question and what was its meaning?

The apostles didn't need to stand there continuing to look into the sky / heaven.
Jesus would return the same way he left, and they had work to do on earth.

Verses 12-26

What are the events and people of these verses? Discuss related cross-references.

The apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's journey.
This distance had become 3,000 to 3,600 feet at Jesus' time.
Compare this with the "Map of Jerusalem."

Exodus 16:29

This is what God said about the Sabbath.
The people of Israel were to stay in their place that day.

The eleven apostles were staying in an upper room in Jerusalem.
Verse 14 tells who was with them.

Compare this with Luke 6:12-16; John 7:2-5; and Luke 8:19-21.
They were with one mind / accord continually devoted to prayer.
They stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded / ordered them.

Then verse 15 says about 120 believers were gathered.
Peter stood and spoke to them about what must take place next.

One should be chosen to take Judas's place with the other apostles.

This was to fulfill Scripture the Holy Spirit spoke through David.
It was after devoting themselves to prayer and being of one mind / accord.

The requirements were:

Accompanied them the whole time Jesus went in and out among them
Beginning with John's baptism until His ascension
A witness of His resurrection—this is what they were to do.

Peter called this a ministry in verses 17 and 25.

Matthias was chosen by lot to be added to / numbered with the eleven apostles.
Proverbs 16:33 says the lot is decided by the Lord.

Ask about the significance of the number twelve to Israel.

Luke 22:28-30 and Revelation 21:10-14

There were twelve tribes of Israel and twelve apostles chosen by the Lord.

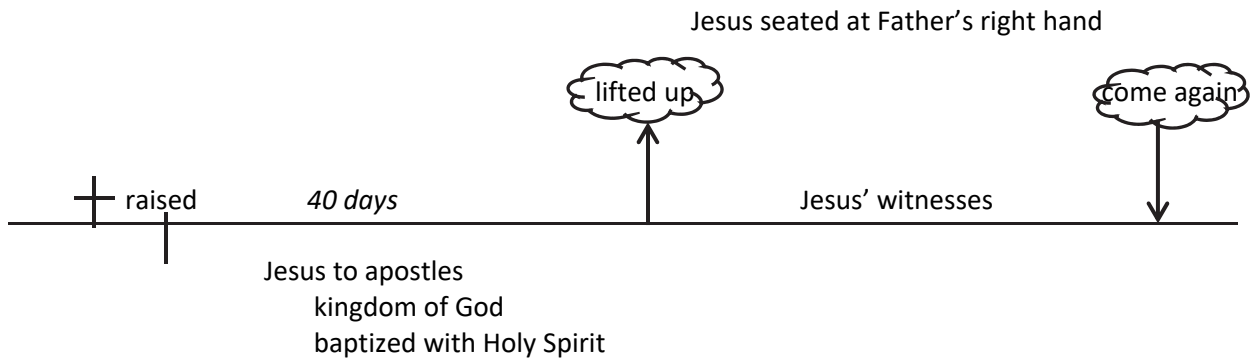
Relate this to Acts 1. There had to be twelve apostles.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and ask what they wrote as a possible chapter theme for Acts 1.

Maybe something like:

Jesus to 11 apostles—Holy Spirit, My witnesses; Jesus ascended; 12th apostle chosen

To end this discussion, ask your group what they learned from this chapter to be applied to their lives. Give a short time for them to share.



**ACTS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 2**

Lesson emphasis:

- Acts 2

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember as the main points of Acts 1. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart if they need reminders.

As a visual aid for this discussion, you can put some of the main points on a timeline and add to it as your group discusses. See the end of this lesson's guide.

Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles over a period of / during 40 days after His resurrection, and spoke to them about the kingdom of God.

When they were together, He commanded / ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but wait for the Father's promise. They had heard about it from Him. They were to be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from then.

He told them that when the Spirit came on them, they would have power; power to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part / end of the earth.

Then Jesus was taken up to heaven as they watched.

The apostles went from the Mount of Olives back to the upper room in Jerusalem. They were devoted to prayer, along with the others who were with them, about 120.

They fulfilled Scripture by selecting the twelfth apostle to take Judas's place. Matthias was chosen by lot.

ACTS 2

How does Acts 2 connect with Acts 1?

Acts 2 is the fulfillment of Jesus' promise in Acts 1:5 and 8.

When did the first part of this chapter take place?

Tell your group to look at the Feasts chart, and ask what they learned from the cross-references.

The day of Pentecost

This yearly feast occurs 50 days after First fruits / Firstfruits.

Jesus was crucified on Passover and raised on First fruits / Firstfruits.

NOTE: First fruits / Firstfruits is the day after the Sabbath during the seven days of Unleavened Bread.

John 1:29-33

Jesus was the Lamb of God who took away the world's sin.
He is the one who baptizes in / with the Holy Spirit.

Relate this to Acts 1:4-5 and 2:33 that says Jesus poured forth / out the Spirit on Pentecost.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8

Christ our Passover / Passover lamb has been sacrificed.

1 Corinthians 15:20-23

Christ was raised from the dead as the first fruits / firstfruits.

Pentecost was only ten days after Jesus' promise in Acts 1.

Acts 1:3 says He appeared over a period of / during 40 days after His resurrection, and verse 5 says they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from then. It was ten days later.

NOTE: Jerusalem was crowded on these feast days because all the men of Israel were to go there to celebrate the feasts. They even came from other nations where they lived to visit Jerusalem during the feasts.

Verses 1-4

What happened on the day of Pentecost?

The believers were gathered in one place and a sudden violent / mighty rushing wind from heaven filled the whole house where they were.

Tongues as of fire distributing themselves (ESV says divided tongues) appeared to the believers. These tongues as of fire rested on each of them.

As that happened, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:5 and 8 Jesus said they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit and the Spirit would come on them.

They were baptized with the Spirit.
He came on them.
They were filled with the Spirit.

These are three synonymous terms.

When they were filled with the Spirit, He gave them utterance to speak with other tongues or languages, verse 6.

This was all from God, and it was what Jesus said would happen.

Verses 5-13

Who and what are these verses about?

Tell your group to look at the map to see where these Jews were from.

At that time Jews from all nations were living in Jerusalem.

NOTE: Some in your group might bring up the dispersion of Israel by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. While the Babylonian captivity might account for some of those nations, we don't know how they got to all those countries. But by the time of Acts 2, some Jews who were born in other nations went back to places in Israel, like Jerusalem, to live. Since they had lived in other nations, they knew the language of those nations.

The noise / sound of verse 2 drew a crowd / multitude to where the believers were. The people were bewildered because they heard their native languages spoken, telling of God's mighty deeds / works.

Verse 7 says they were amazed and astonished because they knew the ones speaking were Galileans, not from the nations where the languages were spoken.

Verses 12-13 tell the different results: amazement and perplexity as to what it meant, but others said they were full of sweet / new wine.

Verses 14-21

Why did Peter begin his message, his witness, the way he did? Discuss related cross-references.

Peter answered the question as to what it meant and also defended the apostles by saying they weren't drunk. Scripture was being fulfilled.

God said through Joel that He would pour forth / out His Spirit on all mankind / flesh, His bondslaves / servants, in the last days. This was the Father's promise Jesus spoke of in Acts 1:4-5.

God qualified who He meant by all mankind / flesh; He meant His bondslaves / servants, not every person who lives. All mankind / flesh also refers to Gentiles, as well as Jews. Compare with Acts 1:8, remotest part of the earth / end of the earth and 2:39, those far off.

Hebrews 1:1-2

The last days began with Jesus.

1 Peter 1:18-21

Jesus appeared / made manifest in these / the last times for the sake of the believers He redeemed / ransomed with His blood.

2 Peter 3:3-4

In the last days mockers / scoffers will mock / scoff and question the promise of Jesus' coming.

2 Timothy 3:1

The last days will have difficult times—self-centered men holding a form of godliness trying to lead people astray.

James 5:3

The unbelieving rich store up treasure in the last days, but it will witness (ESV—is evidence) against them and consume them (ESV—eat their flesh).

At any point during this discussion, give your group time to talk about relevant application. Lead the discussion back to Acts 2, and ask what else they learned from Peter quoting Joel.

God poured forth / out His Spirit on all God's bondslaves / servants—sons and daughters, young men and old, men and women. The result was visions, dreams, and prophesying.

Verses 19-20 tell what will happen before the day of the Lord comes.
Wonders in the sky / heavens and signs on earth.

Revelation 6:12 and Joel 2:31

These are the other references about the moon turning to or being like blood. It's the time when the Lamb Jesus breaks / opens the sixth seal on the scroll. That will take place in the future.

Joel's prophecy covers the time from Acts 2 to the sixth seal, at least.

Verse 21 says everyone who calls on the Lord's name will be saved.

Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:18-21

Jesus proclaimed the favorable year of the Lord (ESV—year of the Lord's favor), which is before the day of His vengeance. It's the time for people to call on His name for salvation.

Joel 2:1-2

The day of the Lord will be a time like no other, darkness and gloom.

Peter offered hope for salvation from what is to happen during the day of the Lord, the day of His vengeance. Peter said this to the crowd at Pentecost, probably most of the people who had also been in Jerusalem for Jesus' crucifixion at Passover. Some of them might have even called for Him to be crucified.

Verses 22-36

How did Peter's message continue? Who are these verses about?

In explaining what had just happened—God pouring forth / out His Spirit, the noise / sound and tongues—Peter witnessed about Jesus. Relate this to Acts 1:8.

Verse 22, the people knew what Jesus had done among them. It had been less than two months since His crucifixion during Passover.

Verses 23-24 tell about God's part. He delivered Jesus according to His predetermined / definite plan, His plan for salvation—His plan for the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world by redemption through His innocent blood.

Peter also told about the people's part—they nailed Him to a cross by the hands of godless / lawless men, the Romans. Peter held them responsible for Jesus' death.

Then he told them that God raised Jesus up again because it was impossible for Him to be held in death's power. He quoted more Scripture which the men of Israel would know; he quoted from David's Psalms.

Jesus' soul was not abandoned to Hades. God's Holy One didn't decay / see corruption, Psalm 16:8-11. Peter explained that David didn't say this about himself, but the Christ. David was a prophet and knew the Lord's oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, 2 Samuel 23:2; 7:8, 12-16.

Verse 32 repeats that God raised Jesus after the people had killed Him. Peter said he and the eleven, verse 14, were witnesses. Relate this to Acts 1:8, 21-22, 26.

How did Peter's witness compare with 1 Corinthians 15:1-10?

The main points of the gospel Paul preached and wrote about are:

Jesus died for sins, according to the Scripture.

His burial was proof of death.

He was raised on the third day, according to the Scripture.

His appearances proved He was alive.

These were the two main points about Jesus that Peter preached on Pentecost.

How did Peter end his witnessing in Acts 2:33-36?

Jesus was exalted to God's right hand and received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father and poured forth / out that promise.

God said in Joel that He would pour out His Spirit on His people. Peter said God did this through Jesus after His ascension to the Father.

Again, Peter quoted David, Psalm 110:1, to confirm Jesus' ascension. Jesus will be at the Father's right hand until His enemies are His footstool. That is also future.

Verse 36 again points out who crucified Jesus—the people of Israel, along with the Romans. Israel crucified their Lord and Christ.

Verses 37-42

How did the people respond to what Peter said?

They were pierced / cut to the heart. They realized what they had done when they had Jesus crucified.

They asked the apostles what to do, and Peter told them.

Repent

“to change one's mind”⁶; “to *think differently*”⁷

“to change one's way of life as the result of a complete change of thought and attitude with regard to sin and righteousness”⁸

Be baptized in Jesus' name for forgiveness of sins

The result was that they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The promise is for them—those people there, people of Israel
—their children, descendants of Israel
—all far off

—as many as (ESV—everyone whom) the Lord
calls to Himself

Romans 8:9, 14, 16

All who are saved receive the Holy Spirit; these are the children of God.

The Spirit bears witness / testifies with our spirit that we are His children.

Lead your discussion back to Acts 2:40-42. What do these verses say?

Peter kept on testifying / bearing witness and exhorting the people.
He kept calling them to be saved.

The result was about 3,000 souls were added that day.

They received Peter's word—they believed it.

They were baptized as he said in verse 38.

⁶James Strong, *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon* (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995), G3340.

⁷James Strong, *The New Strong's Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996), G3340.

⁸Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996, c1989), 1:509.

They continually devoted themselves to:

- the apostles' teaching
- fellowship—"joint participation"⁹; "sharing in common"¹⁰
- breaking bread; relate this to verse 46
- prayer; relate this to Acts 1:14

Ask your group if these things relate to believers now. Give time for them to discuss.

Verses 43-47

How does this chapter end? Discuss relevant cross-references.

The apostles were doing many wonders and signs.
The believers were in awe.

They sold property / possessions to share with those who had needs.
They were together daily in the temple and houses.

Luke 12:33

Jesus said to sell possessions and give. Make a treasure in heaven.

Luke 14:33

He also said no one can be His disciple if he doesn't give up all his possessions (ESV—renounce all that he has).

They praised God, and their salvation had a favorable effect on all the people.
The Lord continued to add to their number daily. People were being saved day by day.

What is the theme of this chapter? Ask what your group noted on their At a Glance chart.

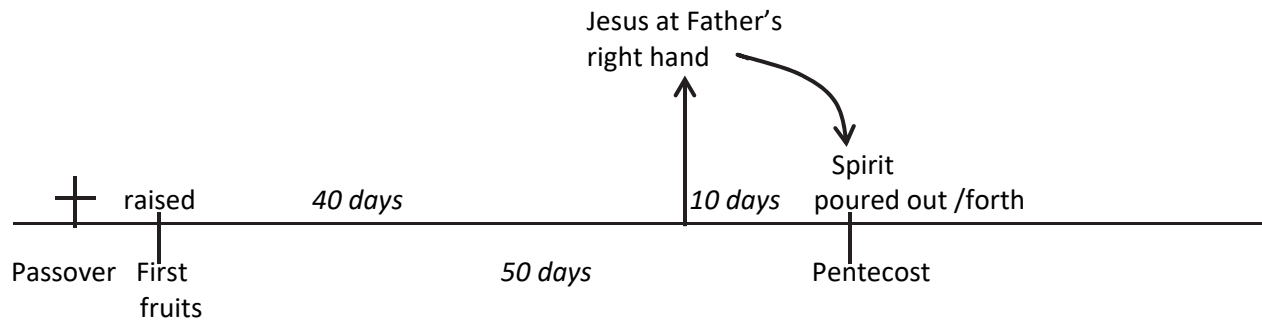
They might have something similar to:

Holy Spirit came on Pentecost; Peter witnessed in Jerusalem

To end your discussion, ask your group how these things apply to church today. Give time for them to share.

⁹James Strong, *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon* (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995), G2842.

¹⁰Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament, Baker's Greek New Testament library* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000), p. 233.



ACTS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 3

Lesson emphasis:

- Acts 3:1–4:31

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember as the main points of Acts 1 and 2.
Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart if they need reminders.

Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles over 40 days after His resurrection and spoke to them about the kingdom of God.

When they were together, He commanded / ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but wait for the Father's promise. They had heard about it from Him. They were to be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from then.

He told them that when the Spirit came on them, they would have power; power to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part / end of the earth.

Then Jesus was taken up to heaven as they watched.

The apostles went from the Mount of Olives back to the upper room in Jerusalem. They were devoted to prayer, along with the others who were with them, about 120.

They fulfilled Scripture in selecting the twelfth apostle to take Judas's place. Matthias was chosen by lot.

Acts 2 is the fulfillment of Jesus' promise in Acts 1:5 and 8.

On the day of Pentecost, the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak about God's mighty deeds / works in other tongues or languages. The people in Jerusalem heard and were amazed.

Then Peter witnessed to them by explaining from Joel that God poured forth / out His Spirit on all His bondslaves / servants—men and women, young and old.

Peter included in His witness that they had put Jesus to death, the one who was both Lord and Christ. God raised Him, and Peter and the eleven with him were witnesses. He quoted from the Psalms David wrote and said he prophesied the Lord's resurrection.

As a result, about 3,000 souls were saved that day.

God’s promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit was for them because they repented and were baptized in Jesus’ name for forgiveness of their sins.

The gift of the Spirit is also for their children, Jewish descendants, and those far off, Gentiles. The promise of being baptized with the Spirit is for all the Lord calls to Himself.

They were devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer. The apostles were doing wonders and signs, and the Lord was adding daily to their number.

ACTS 3

Verses 1-10

How does this chapter begin? What was the event?

Tell your group to look at “The Temple Complex” and the “Map of Jerusalem” as visual aids.

Peter and John went to the temple at the hour of prayer, the 9th hour of the day—3 pm.

Peter healed a lame man who begged for alms at the Beautiful Gate.

He spoke to the man and told him to walk.

In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene / of Nazareth

The people who saw him were filled with wonder and amazement because he was walking and praising the Lord. They recognized him as the lame man.

Verses 11-26

What happened because of this healing? Discuss the cross-references.

Tell them to look at their list “In the Name of Jesus Christ” as a visual aid for this discussion.

People gathered around the man who was with Peter and John at the portico of Solomon (ESV—called Solomon’s). Again the text says they were amazed / astounded.

Peter took opportunity with the crowd gathered to witness about Jesus again.

God glorified His servant Jesus whom they disowned / denied when Pilate wanted to release Him.

Isaiah 42:1-8 and 53:11

God chose and put His Spirit on Him. He was given as a covenant to / for the people and a light to / for the nations to open eyes. He was the Righteous One who bore iniquities of many to make them righteous.

They disowned / denied the Righteous One / righteous one and asked for a murderer. They put to death the Prince / Author of life whom God raised from the dead.

Genesis 1:26; 2:7

God made man in His image and likeness. He breathed into man the breath of life. God referred to Himself in the plural.

John 1:1-4; 14:6 and 1 John 5:11-12

Jesus is part of the Godhead who created man. In Him is life. He is the source of life—without Him there is no life.

The man was healed by faith in Jesus' name.

How does Peter's witness compare with Acts 1:8 and what he said in Acts 2?

Peter and John were witnesses of Jesus' resurrection.
Because of the Holy Spirit coming on them, they witnessed in Jerusalem.

Two supernatural events drew a crowd; both events were from God.
Peter explained the events and related each to Jesus.

The people listening put Him to death.
God raised Him from the dead.
Peter and the other apostles were witnesses.
God foretold what would happen in the prophets.

Peter called the people listening to repent so their sins would be forgiven and blotted out. Also, in chapter 2, part of the result is receiving the Holy Spirit.

You might ask your group if they take advantage of situations to tell the simple statements of Jesus' death for our sins and His resurrection for believers to live.

According to verses 20-26, what did the prophets foretell?

Verses 20-21 tell of Jesus being in heaven until the time of restoration.
Compare this with Acts 1:6.

Moses foretold that God would raise up a prophet like him from among the people, and they were to listen to him, Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19. Moses spoke for God, and this prophet—Jesus—also spoke for God. The result of not listening to Him is destruction.

Verses 24-26 bring in all the prophets. They spoke of Jesus.

First, He was sent to the sons of the Abrahamic covenant.
In it God promised to bless all families of the earth through Abraham's descendant—Jesus. Relate this to Acts 1:8.

The blessing results from turning from wickedness or repentance.

What is the theme of this chapter? Ask what your group noted on their At a Glance chart.

They might have something similar to:

Peter and John healed lame man at temple; Peter witnessed about Jesus

ACTS 4

Verses 1-4

How does this continue from chapter 3?

While Peter and John were speaking to the people about Jesus' resurrection, some leaders arrested them and put them in jail.

Priests

Captain of the temple

Sadducees

NOTE: Someone in your group might know the Sadducees didn't believe in resurrection.

But many of those who heard the message believed.

The number of men came to be about 5,000.

NOTE: Commentators differ a little in what they say about the 5,000 men. It probably means that the total number of men was 5,000, including all from Acts 2 and 3. But it is unclear as to whether this number refers to only men or includes women, too.

Verses 5-12

What happened next?

The next day the leaders gathered and brought Peter and John before them.

Rulers

Elders

Scribes

Annas the high priest

Caiaphas

John

Alexander

And all of high priestly descent / family

They asked Peter and John one question which gave another opportunity for witness. This witness was specifically to the leaders, the Council of Jerusalem.

Peter answered their question by saying it was in Jesus' name that the man was healed. Then he repeated the main points of all the witnessing in Acts 2 and 3, that they crucified Jesus and God raised Him from the dead.

They, the builders, rejected the corner stone / cornerstone. Jesus' name is the only name by which men are saved.

Verses 13-22

What was the result of Peter’s witness in these verses? Ask about the word study.

The leaders were amazed / astonished at Peter’s and John’s confidence / boldness because they were uneducated and untrained / common men.

confidence / boldness—“freedom or frankness in speaking”¹¹
“*all out-spokenness, i.e. frankness, bluntness, publicity;*
by impl. *assurance*”¹²

Based on the context of Acts 2 and 3, what showed Peter’s and John’s confidence / boldness? Give your group time to discuss relevant application.

What was the leaders’ response?

Because a man had been healed through Peter and John and most people in Jerusalem knew it, they couldn’t deny it. But they commanded / charged them not to speak any more in Jesus’ name.

Again, Peter and John showed confidence / boldness with their answer. They told the Council to judge if it’s better to obey men or God. Then they said they couldn’t stop speaking of what they had seen and heard. That’s the definition of a witness. Relate this to Acts 1:8.

The Council found nothing to punish them for, but threatened them.

Verses 23-31

Who and what are these verses about?

When Peter and John were released, they reported to their companions / friends what had happened. They all praised God and made a request in prayer.

Ask your group how this prayer resembles their own. How does it begin? How much of it is focused on God and His plan? Give time for discussion about what they’ve observed about prayer in Acts 1–3.

What was the praise in verses 24-28?

God created all.

The Holy Spirit spoke or prophesied through David.

¹¹ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000), G3954.

¹² James Strong, *The New Strong’s Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996), G3954.

Here in Acts it says David wrote the words in verses 25-26 which are part of Psalm 2.

The interpretation or fulfillment of this Psalm is given in verse 27.
But verse 28 again tells who is in complete control.

What is the request in verses 29-30?

They asked God to take note of (ESV—look upon) the Council's threats.
Then they asked for Him to grant for them to speak His word with confidence / boldness.
(ESV says "continue(d) to speak" in verses 29 and 31.)

Peter had been doing that since the Holy Spirit had come on all of them.
The other apostles had also been speaking, Acts 2:42; 4:1.

The last part of the request was for God to heal and do signs and wonders in Jesus' name.

Was their request answered?

Verse 31 tells what happened as the answer came.
Prayer based on God's stated plans or will is always answered.
Their focus was on doing what He planned and willed, not their own plans.

To end this discussion, you might ask what your group learned about prayer for their lives.

ACTS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 4

Lesson emphasis:

- Acts 4:32–5:42

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember as the main points of Acts 1–4.
Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart if they need reminders.

Acts 1

Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles and commanded / ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but wait for the Father’s promise. They were to be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from then.

When the Spirit came on them, they would receive power and be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part / end of the earth.

Jesus was taken up to heaven as they watched.

The apostles fulfilled Scripture in selecting the twelfth apostle to take Judas’s place. Matthias was chosen by lot.

Acts 2

This is the fulfillment of Jesus’ promise in Acts 1:5 and 8. On Pentecost the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak about God’s mighty deeds /works in other tongues or languages. The people in Jerusalem heard and were amazed.

Then Peter witnessed and verified his points with Old Testament prophets.

God poured forth / out His Spirit on all His bondslaves / servants.
The men of Israel who were listening to Peter had put Jesus to death.
God raised Him.
Peter and the eleven apostles with him were witnesses.

As a result, about 3,000 souls were saved that day.
They repented and were baptized in Jesus’ name for forgiveness of their sins.

The gift of the Spirit is for them, their children, Jewish descendants, and those far off, Gentiles.

They were devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer. The apostles were doing wonders and signs, and the Lord was adding daily to their number.

Acts 3

Another supernatural event, a lame man healed, drew a crowd and Peter witnessed about Jesus again. They put Him to death / killed him, God raised Him, the prophets foretold what would happen, and those listening had to repent for their sins to be wiped away / blotted out.

Acts 4

The number of believers, men, came to be about 5,000. Peter and John were jailed by the Council and Peter witnessed to them about Jesus—the same message, His death and resurrection. Again, he pointed out that they had put Him to death. The Council threatened them, told them not to speak in Jesus' name, then released them.

When they were released and reported to their companions / friends, they all prayed for confidence / boldness to speak (ESV—continue to speak). God answered.

ACTS 4:32-37

How does this chapter end? Also, ask about the cross-references.

The believers were of one heart and soul, and they shared everything.
As a result, there wasn't anyone needy among them.

John 17:20-26

Jesus prayed before He was arrested, tried, and crucified. His prayer was for His apostles and for those who would believe in Him through the apostles' word about Him.

He prayed that they all be one, like the Father and He are one. He prayed that so the world would know the Father sent Him and loved them. His prayer for believers was about unity and love.

John 13:1, 34-35 and 15:12-13

When Jesus was with the eleven apostles, He gave them a new commandment—to love one another as He had loved them. He was about to lay down His life for them. By this love, all men will know they are His disciples.

1 John 3:13-18

John, one of the eleven, wrote about this kind of love. It's how one knows he has truly believed and has eternal life. Believers are to lay down their lives for one another. Part of that is providing for one another's needs, loving in deed and in truth.

You might ask your group how they are doing in this area of sharing and providing for one another's needs. Give time for discussion.

Lead the discussion back to Acts 4:33-37. Ask about these verses.

The apostles were testifying about Jesus' resurrection with great power.

Compare this with Acts 1:8.

People were selling their property and giving the money to the apostles to be distributed to any who had need.

One man who did that was a Levite from Cyprus named Joseph and called Barnabas—son of encouragement—by the apostles.

Ask what your group noted on their At a Glance charts as the theme or main events of this chapter.

Maybe something like:

Peter and John jailed; witnessed before Council; report to companions / friends

ACTS 5

Verses 1-11

How does this chapter continue from Acts 4:32-37?

Ask about the cross-reference and word study when relevant.

Ananias and Sapphira are contrasted with Barnabas.

They also sold property, but kept some of the price, and gave the rest to the apostles.

Ananias and Sapphira said they gave the full amount to the apostles. They lied about the price. The property and money from its sale belonged to them, and they could have done whatever they wanted with it. The problem arose when they lied about the price.

According to verse 3, Satan filled Ananias's heart to lie to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was in the apostles, and Ananias lied to them.

Satan was in him. The text does not refer to Ananias and Sapphira as believers.

John 8:44

Satan, the devil is the father of lies and a murderer.

His lies led to Ananias's and Sapphira's deaths.

Ananias breathed his last and fear came over all who heard about it.

About three hours later the same happened to his wife.

They tested the Holy Spirit and died because of it.

Fear came on the whole church and all who heard about them lying and dying.

church—"a *calling out*"¹³; "congregation; assembly"¹⁴

¹³ J. Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, Greek Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1985), G1577.

¹⁴ Barclay M. Newman, Jr. *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament* (Stuttgart, Germany: United Bible Societies, 1971), p. 55.

Since this is the first time “church” is used in Acts, you can draw a church as a visual aid.

You might ask your group what they think about fearing God. Should people fear lying to Him now?

Ask what they learned from the cross-references about man’s breath or life.

Genesis 2:7 and Job 27:1-3

God’s breath gives man the breath of life.

Job 12:9-10 and 34:14-15

He controls the breath of all. If He gathered His spirit and breath, all flesh would perish.

Verses 12-16

Who, what, and where are these verses about?

Tell your group to look at “The Temple Complex” diagram as a visual aid.

The apostles were doing signs and wonders. Compare this with the prayer request in Acts 4:29-30. God did the signs and wonders through the apostles.

It seems that Solomon’s portico was where they gathered. It was where Peter witnessed after the lame man was healed in Acts 3.

The Lord was adding multitudes to the believers, but others didn’t dare join them although they held the church in high esteem. It was probably because of what happened to Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts 2:37-41, 47 and 4:4

The Lord is the one who added those being saved.

He calls to Himself and saves.

On your church drawing you can note to the side, “God adds.”

Healing was taking place even when Peter’s shadow fell on some. Unclean spirits were coming out of people also.

People were even coming from cities / towns outside, but in the vicinity of, Jerusalem.

Verses 17-26

What happened as a result?

The high priest and Sadducees were filled with jealousy and put the apostles in jail / prison. But an angel of the Lord opened the prison gates and told them:

Go, speak in the temple the whole message / words of this Life.

They did at daybreak.

The Council was perplexed about what would happen. They got a report that the apostles were in the temple teaching the people.

When the captain and officers of the temple went to bring the apostles back to the Council, they did it without violence / force because they feared the people.

Verses 27-32

What happened when the apostles were before the Council?

The high priest questioned them.

Verse 28 says the apostles had filled Jerusalem with their teaching.

The high priest reminded the apostles that they had been commanded by the Council not to teach in Jesus' name. Then he said they intended to bring Jesus' blood on them.

That was accurate because they were the main ones who called for His blood.

How does the cross-reference in Matthew compare?

Matthew 27:15-26

The chief priests and elders persuaded the people to ask Pilate to put Jesus to death. They all agreed that His blood was on them and their children.

What do the cross-references in Acts 2 and 4 say?

Acts 2:22-23, 37-39

Sin was forgiven for the 3,000 or so who repented and were baptized in Jesus' name. The same is true for all those the Lord adds in salvation.

Acts 4:5-12, 17-20

The apostles could not stop speaking (ESV—could not but speak) what they had seen and heard because, since God sent His Holy Spirit on them, they were Jesus' witnesses. Their witness pierced people's hearts so they were saved and became part of the growing church.

Lead your discussion back to Acts 5.

Verse 29 again states that the apostles told the Council they must obey God rather than them, men. Verses 30-32 contain the same main points of Jesus' witnesses.

Those listening crucified Jesus.

God raised and exalted Him to His right hand as Prince / Leader and Savior.

Repent for forgiveness.

We are witnesses.

The Holy Spirit is a witness, and He is given to those who obey—those who obey the call for repentance and identification with Jesus, Acts 2:38-39.

Verses 33-39

What is the contrast in verse 33 with Acts 2:37?

The Council was cut to the quick /enraged and intended / wanted to kill the apostles like they did Jesus. Those who believed in Acts 2 were pierced / cut to the heart. Compare this with Hebrews 4:12-13.

This was the second time the Council heard the witness about Jesus. Peter and John witnessed to them in Acts 4.

Why didn't they believe? Was it the apostles' fault? Discuss the cross-references.

Luke 10:16

They rejected the witness because they rejected Jesus.

John 10:22-28

They didn't believe because they weren't Jesus' sheep. They didn't hear His voice. They refused to follow Him.

John 6:37, 44

All the Father draws to Jesus will come to Him. Salvation is of God.

2 Corinthians 2:14-17

People are either being saved or perishing.

Ask your group how this applies to them and how they witness. Give time for discussion.

Lead your discussion back to Acts 5:34-39.

Who on the Council had a good suggestion and what was it?

A Pharisee named Gamaliel who was respected / held in honor by all the people

NOTE: Unlike the Sadducees, the party from whom the high priest was chosen, the Pharisees believed in resurrection.

He cautioned the Council about what they planned to do with the apostles—they intended / wanted to kill them.

He reminded them of another two who claimed to be somebody, but their followers dispersed and came to nothing.

He also said that if this were from God, they would not be able to overthrow it and they would be fighting / opposing God.

Verses 40-42

How does this chapter end?

The Council took Gamaliel's advice, but they still had the apostles flogged / beaten.
They restated their order not to speak in Jesus' name.

When the apostles were released, they rejoiced to be worthy to suffer shame / dishonor
for His name.

Every day they kept teaching Jesus as the Christ, in the temple and houses.

Ask what your group noted on their At a Glance chart as a possible theme for Acts 5.

They might have something like:

Ananias and Sapphira died; apostles jailed, flogged, released, kept on preaching Jesus

To end this discussion, you might ask what they learned as lessons for life from this lesson.

ACTS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 5

Lesson emphasis:

- Acts 6–7

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember as the main points of Acts 1–5. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart if they need reminders. They can also look at their notes on Day Two as they discuss how believers were referred to in Acts 1–5.

Acts 1

Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles and commanded / ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but wait for the Father's promise. They were to be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from then.

When the Spirit came on them, they would receive power and be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part / end of the earth.

Jesus was taken up to heaven as they watched.

The apostles fulfilled Scripture in selecting a twelfth apostle to take Judas's place.

Acts 2

Jesus' promise in Acts 1:5 and 8 was fulfilled. On Pentecost the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak about God's mighty deeds / works in other tongues or languages. The people in Jerusalem heard and were amazed.

Then Peter witnessed and verified his points with Old Testament prophets.

As a result, about 3,000 souls were saved that day.

They repented and were baptized in Jesus' name for forgiveness of their sins.

The believers were devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer. The apostles were doing wonders and signs, and the Lord was adding daily to their number those being saved.

Acts 3

Another supernatural event, a lame man healed, drew a crowd, and Peter witnessed about Jesus again.

Acts 4

The number of believers, men, came to be about 5,000. Peter and John were jailed by the Council and Peter witnessed to them about Jesus—the same message, His death and resurrection. Again, he pointed out that they had put Him to death. The Council threatened them, told them not to speak in Jesus’ name, then released them.

When they were released and reported to their companions / friends, they all prayed for confidence / boldness to speak (ESV—continue to speak). God answered His bond-servants / servants.

The congregation of believers had one heart and soul. All things were shared as common property.

Acts 5

A contrast begins this chapter. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit and died. Fear came on the whole church and unbelievers didn’t associate with / join them, but held them in high esteem. Multitudes of believers were added to the Lord.

The apostles were jailed and witnessed again to the Council. They were flogged and again they were told not to speak in Jesus’ name. When released, they kept on teaching daily in His name in the temple and houses.

ACTS 6

Tell your group to look at the map “The Roman World in the Time of Acts” and their list on the Holy Spirit as visual aids for this part of your discussion.

Verses 1-7

How does this chapter begin?

At the time when the disciples were increasing, because:
The Lord was adding to the number
The apostles were witnessing in Jesus’ name

What happened?

A complaint arose because the Hellenistic widows were overlooked when the food was served / distributed daily. They were not native Hebrews. Compare this with Acts 2:9-11.

What do the cross-references say about widows?

Deuteronomy 26:12-13; Psalm 146:9; Isaiah 1:16-17

God gave specific instructions about taking care of orphans and widows, care and justice for their provision and protection. The Lord protects them.

1 Timothy 5:14-16 and James 1:27

Paul and James wrote how believers are to take care of widows.

Lead your discussion back to Acts 6 and ask how the problem was solved.

The solution for this problem was not for the apostles to neglect their ministry of the word (ESV—give up preaching the word), since this ministry had been commanded by the Lord for them. Other men were selected to oversee this ministry of serving.

Seven men
Good reputation
Full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom
Put in charge of serving / appoint to this duty
Selected / picked out by the congregation
Brought to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them

Tell your group to look at their chart “What I Learned about Prayer” and then ask what they learned.

Prayer was part of everything the apostles did. They praised God for what He was doing and asked for what they needed to be obedient witnesses and leaders.

The church was also devoted to prayer.

Now, ask what they learned about laying hands on someone. Discuss the cross-references.

The apostles laid hands on the men chosen to oversee the serving.

Numbers 27:15-23

God told Moses to lay his hand on Joshua to commission him as the leader of Israel.

1 Timothy 5:17-22

This is a caution for the church: don’t lay hands on someone too hastily, especially elders—church leaders.

You might ask how this applies to people serving in church now, especially leaders. Would the process in Acts 6 be good for selecting those in charge of serving in churches now? Give your group time to discuss application.

How does verse 7 compare with others in Acts 1–6?

God’s Word kept on spreading because the apostles didn’t neglect their ministry. The number of disciples continued to increase in Jerusalem, Acts 1:8. Even priests were becoming obedient to the faith—another way of saying they were saved.

Verses 8-15

Who are these verses about? How is he described? What happened to him?

Stephen, one of the seven,

full of faith and the Spirit, grace and power
performing / doing wonders and signs
spoke with wisdom and the Spirit

The Synagogue of the Freedmen brought false witnesses against Stephen.

Blasphemous words against Moses and God

Spoke against the holy place and the Law / law
Jesus will destroy this place and alter Moses' customs (ESV—change the
customs that Moses delivered)

Stephen was brought before the Council.
His face looked like the face of an angel.

At this point, you might ask about other false witnesses concerning Jesus destroying the temple.

John 2:18-22

Jesus spoke of His body, the temple, as He spoke to the Jews who questioned His authority. Destroy this temple—they would destroy His body. He raised it in three days.

Matthew 26:60-61

False witnesses against Jesus used this to accuse Him of saying He would destroy the temple.

Ask what your group learned about false witnesses and blasphemy from the cross-references.

Exodus 20:16 and Deuteronomy 19:15-19

Don't bear false witness is one of the Ten Commandments.

Judges are to thoroughly investigate (ESV—inquire diligently) matters so people aren't falsely accused. The Council should have thoroughly investigated the accusations against Stephen.

A false witness's punishment was whatever he intended for the one he accused.

Exodus 22:28 and Leviticus 24:11-16, 23

Don't curse / revile God. If anyone does, he will bear his sin. Death was the penalty. A man was stoned for blaspheming "the Name"—God's name.

If Stephen were found guilty of blasphemy, he could be stoned legally.

Ask what your group noted on their At a Glance chart as the theme for this chapter.

They might have something like: 7 chosen; Stephen accused before Council

ACTS 7

Where does chapter 6 end and 7 begin?

Stephen was before the Council, the ones who had heard Jesus' witnesses at least twice.
The last time they wanted to kill the apostles.

Verses 1-16

Who did Stephen begin his defense with? What did he say and why?

Tell your group to look at the map at the end of the lesson as a visual aid.

The God of glory

The false witnesses had accused Stephen of blaspheming God.

He told how God had appeared to Abraham and called him from Chaldea to the land where they lived—Canaan, Israel. God gave Abraham the covenant—referring to the Abrahamic covenant. God promised descendants / offspring and land to him.

Stephen told Israel's history from the beginning; what God had done for them.

God was with Joseph and rescued him when his brothers sold him to Egypt.

Verses 17-43

Who and what are these verses about?

Moses was born, lovely / beautiful in God's sight.

You might refer your group to Acts 6:11 and 13. What was part of the accusations against Stephen?

He spoke against Moses and said Jesus would alter the law.

What are the main points Stephen then makes about Moses and the Law?

The people of Israel didn't understand that Moses was their deliverer / savior.
He was an educated and powerful / mighty man in Egypt for 40 years.

Then he was in Midian for another 40 years.

When he saw God in the burning bush, God sent him back to Egypt to deliver Israel.
Then Stephen referred to a prophecy Moses made in verse 37.

Compare this with Acts 3:22-23; that prophet was Jesus.

God gave Moses His laws—living oracles, and he passed them on to God’s people, even to the Council Stephen addressed.

The fathers disowned / rejected Moses, verse 35, and were unwilling / refused to obey, verse 39. They turned back to Egypt in their hearts and worshiped idols. Then God turned away from them.

In these verses, Stephen addressed the accusation that he spoke against Moses and the Law.

Verses 44-50

What did Stephen address in this part of his defense?

His accusers said he spoke against the holy place, the temple.

Moses built the tabernacle / tent according to the pattern God gave him. David wanted to find a permanent dwelling for God, but Solomon built the house in Jerusalem.

Stephen quoted what God said in Isaiah 66:1-2a. God created everything and lives in heaven.

Verses 51-53

What was Stephen’s point as he ended his defense?

He told the Council they were just like their fathers in resisting the Holy Spirit.
The people were obstinate / stiff-necked, Exodus 32:9 and 33:3, 5.

The fathers persecuted and killed the prophets who announced Jesus’ coming, and they murdered Jesus. They received the law but didn’t keep it.

Verses 54-60

How does this chapter end? How did Stephen compare with Jesus?

They killed Stephen; because he said he saw Jesus at God’s right hand.
In Mark 14:61-62, Jesus had told the Council the same thing.

They covered their ears because they didn’t want to hear—they were uncircumcised in heart and ears.

As Stephen and Jesus were being killed, they spoke about forgiveness, Luke 23:34, 46. Jesus committed himself to God’s hands, and Stephen to Jesus’. Stephen lost his life, but gained it, Luke 9:23-26.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart for the theme of this chapter.

Possibly—Stephen told Israel’s history to Council; stoned, saw Jesus

To end your discussion, ask what they learned from Stephen’s example to apply to their lives.

**ACTS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 6**

Lesson emphasis:

- Acts 8

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember as the main points of Acts 1–7. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart if they need reminders.

Jesus promised the apostles that they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit.
power
Jesus' witnesses
in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, remotest part / the end of the earth

God poured forth / out His Holy Spirit on His bondslaves / servants.
The apostles witnessed, the Lord added, and the church began and grew in Jerusalem.

The Jewish Council commanded the apostles to stop speaking in Jesus' name, but they couldn't stop.

Stephen, one of the seven, was also brought before the Council which resulted in their stoning him to death. A young man named Saul was there as Stephen was being stoned.

Tell your group to look at the “Map of Israel” as a visual aid for this discussion.

ACTS 8

Verses 1-3

How do these verses continue from Acts 7?

Saul agreed with / approved of Stephen being stoned.

That day persecution broke out against the Jerusalem church, and the believers were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. But the apostles stayed in Jerusalem.
Compare the places in verse 1 with the places in Acts 1:8.

Stephen was buried and lamented, but Saul began ravaging the church.
He had men and women put in prison.

Verses 4-8

Who and what are these verses about?

Philip, one of the seven and also an evangelist, went to Samaria and proclaimed Christ. Like Stephen, who was also one of the seven, Philip did signs and miracles. People were being healed. As a result, the people of Samaria were rejoicing.

Who were the Samaritans?

2 Kings 17:21-41

The kingdom of Israel divided into two parts after Solomon died. The Northern Kingdom was named Israel, and the Southern Kingdom was called Judah. Israel had ten of the twelve tribes. It was an evil kingdom involved with idol worship. Samaria was its main city.

God sent the king of Assyria to destroy Israel. He sent people from other nations to Israel to mix with a few Israelites who remained there. The people from other nations brought their gods with them.

As a result, that area became a mixture of bloodlines and gods to worship.

Matthew 10:5-6

Jesus named three groups of people: Gentiles, Samaritans, and Israel. First, Jesus sent the twelve to Israel only. Compare this with Romans 1:16.

John 4:1-42

In Jesus' time, Samaritans were hated by the Jews. His disciples, including Peter and John, were amazed / marveled that Jesus talked with a Samaritan woman.

She knew certain things about God and was expecting the Christ. But her ideas of worship were somewhat different from what the Jews thought. She believed what Jesus said—that He was the Christ. Many other Samaritans from the city of Sychar also believed.

You might ask your group if the truth of Christianity gets mixed with other religions now. What will keep them from being deceived?

Verses 9-13

Who are these verses about and what happened?

Simon a magician amazed the Samaritans for a long time and said he was someone great. They called him the Great Power of God (ESV—power of God that is called Great).

When the Samaritans believed the gospel, they were baptized in Jesus' name. Even Simon believed and was baptized. The signs and miracles Philip did amazed Simon.

Ask what your group learned about the gospel.

Romans 1:16

The power for salvation is in the gospel message.

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

The main points people need to believe are:

Jesus died for our sins according to / in accordance with the Scriptures.

His burial was proof of His death.

He was raised on the third day according to / in accordance with the Scriptures.

He appeared to many, showing proof of His resurrection.

Compare these points with the message of the witnesses in Acts.

Verses 14-17

What was the next event?

The apostles in Jerusalem heard the Samaritans had received the word of God.
This is another term for believing what they heard.

Peter and John were sent to Samaria by the apostles.
They prayed and laid hands on the Samaritans for them to receive the Holy Spirit.

NOTE: Some in your group might want to discuss more about people receiving the Holy Spirit. More will be studied in the last lesson on Acts 10 and 11. You can wait until that lesson to discuss this or discuss at this point what Acts 1–8 says.

Jesus said the apostles would be baptized with the Holy Spirit; He would come on them.
In Acts 2, they were filled with the Holy Spirit; He was poured forth / out on them.

All who repent and are baptized in Jesus' name will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Father's promise.

Acts 1–7 tell about Jews being saved and receiving the Spirit, and Acts 8 is about the Samaritans. In Acts 2:1-4 and Acts 8, a few people believed in Jesus and then at a later point received the Holy Spirit.

NOTE: Don't let your group get into a debate about when believers receive the Spirit. Encourage them that there is more study about this.

Verses 18-24

Who are these verses about and what happened? Discuss cross-references.

Simon saw that when the apostles laid their hands on the Samaritans, the people received the Holy Spirit.

He wanted that power, so he offered them money for it.

Peter's answer to him tells Simon's true spiritual condition:

He was perishing.

He had no part or portion / lot in the matter.

His heart was not right before God.

He needed to repent and be forgiven.

He was in the gall of bitterness and bondage / the bond of iniquity.

This is a description of an unsaved man.

John 2:23-25

True salvation is a matter of the heart—what is inside a person.

Jesus didn't entrust Himself to some who believed in His name because He knew what was in them.

Compare this with those who believed in vain in 1 Corinthians 15:1-2.

Verse 2 says some believe in vain as they don't hold fast the word preached to them. These are not truly saved.

Romans 8:9

If there is no Spirit of Christ within, there is no salvation—that one does not belong to Christ.

Simon, like Ananias and Sapphira, was not truly saved because he had not repented and been forgiven. He was still in wickedness and iniquity.

You can give time for your group to discuss application of these truths, but don't let them focus on other people instead of examining their hearts.

How can knowing this prepare them to use discernment for who they listen to?

Verse 25

What did Peter and John do? Discuss cross-references.

On their way back to Jerusalem, they preached the gospel to many villages in Samaria. They were doing what the Lord Jesus told them to do in Luke 24:44-49 and Matthew 28:19-20. Men of Israel were calling Samaritans to salvation.

The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, but God sent some believing Jews with the gospel.

Ask your group what they think about this. How does it apply now to them?

Verses 26-40

What is the last event of this chapter?

Philip was sent by an angel to an Ethiopian eunuch on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. It seems from the description of him that he was Jewish, or a proselyte.
He had been to Jerusalem to worship.
He was reading Isaiah.

Philip, the evangelist, preached Jesus to him beginning with the passage he was reading in Isaiah 53:7-8.

The man believed and was baptized.

What does Acts 1–8 say about baptism?

There are several baptisms referred to in Acts 1–8.
John the Baptist baptized with water for repentance.
The believers were baptized with the Holy Spirit.
People who repented were to be baptized in Jesus' name for forgiveness.
The Ethiopian was baptized in water.

You might ask your group if Philip's witness to the Ethiopian can be an example to them of how to witness. Give them time to discuss what they think. Ask how familiar they are with the Old Testament, how they can use it to witness, especially to Jews.

What happened to Philip?

The Spirit snatched / carried him away to Azotus.

Philip kept preaching the gospel in cities / towns until he came to Caesarea.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and ask what a possible theme is for this chapter.

Philip preached in Samaria, Peter and John went, Holy Spirit; Philip and Ethiopian

To end this discussion, ask your group if they understand more fully the importance of the gospel message. Are they using that message—Jesus' death and resurrection and man's need to repent—to witness to the lost they know?

**ACTS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 7**

Lesson emphasis:

- Acts 9

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember as the main points of Acts 1–8. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart, if they need reminders, and look at the “Map of Israel.”

Jesus promised the apostles that they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit.
power
Jesus’ witnesses
in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, remotest part / the end of the earth

God poured forth / out His Holy Spirit on His bondslaves / servants.
The apostles witnessed, the Lord added, and the church began and grew in Jerusalem.

The Jewish Council commanded the apostles to stop speaking in Jesus’ name, but they couldn’t stop.

Stephen, one of the seven, was also brought before the Council, which resulted in their stoning him to death.

A young man named Saul was there as Stephen was being stoned, and he heartily agreed with / approved putting him to death. Persecution began against the Jerusalem church, and Saul was part of it.

As a result, all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. They preached the word where they went. Philip went to Samaria, preached Jesus, and the Samaritans believed and were baptized in His name.

Peter and John came from the apostles, prayed for the Samaritans, and laid hands on them, and the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit. Peter and John preached the gospel in Samaritan villages on their way back to Jerusalem.

Philip preached Jesus from Isaiah to an Ethiopian eunuch, and he was saved. Philip then went from Azotus to Caesarea preaching the gospel.

ACTS 9

Verses 1-9

How does this chapter begin? Continue to point your group to the map as a visual aid.

Saul was persecuting the church and got letters from the high priest to take to the synagogues at Damascus so he could bring back to Jerusalem those Jews who belonged to the Way.

What did Jesus say about the way in John 14?

John 14:1-7

Jesus told the eleven apostles, after Judas left them during the last supper, that He was the way to the Father.

What happened to Saul on the road to Damascus?

A sudden light from heaven flashed / shone around him.
He fell to the ground.
A voice asked, “Why are you persecuting Me”?

The voice was Jesus who said Saul was persecuting Him.

Why did Jesus say Saul was persecuting Him? Discuss the cross-references.

John 14:16-20

Jesus told the eleven about the Holy Spirit coming to be with them forever. He would be in them, which is what happened in Acts 2—they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said He is in the Father, believers are in Him, and He in them—in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 1:26-27

This is what Paul wrote years later. Christ is in His saints, the church.

Matthew 25:34-46

Jesus equated His brothers with Himself.

Luke 10:16

When Jesus sent out the 70 / 72, He told them whoever listened / heard or rejected what they said did so to Him.

Lead your discussion back to Acts 9:6-9. What did Jesus tell Saul to do?

Get up and go into Damascus, which he did. He couldn't see so he was led there.

Verses 10-22

Who and what are these verses about?

A disciple at Damascus had a vision in which the Lord told him to go to Straight Street, to Judas's house, and ask for Saul. The Lord also told him Saul had a vision seeing Ananias lay hands on him to regain his sight.

Ananias told the Lord what he'd heard about Saul.
But the Lord said Saul was
 was His chosen instrument to bear / carry His name before
 Gentiles
 Kings
 Israel
 would suffer for Jesus' name

Ananias then obeyed the Lord and went and laid hands on Saul to regain his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Immediately Saul could see; he got up and was baptized.

He stayed in Damascus with the disciples for several days. He proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God in the synagogues, proving Him as the Christ. The people were amazed because of what they knew about Saul's past.

What did Paul write later about his life and conversion? Tell your group to look at "The Roman World in the Time of Acts" map as a visual aid.

Philippians 3:4-7

Before being saved Paul had confidence in the flesh, in his Jewish heritage. He was a Pharisee and zealous persecutor of the church. But after being saved he counted those things as loss for the sake of knowing Christ.

Galatians 1:13-24

He tried to destroy the church before seeing the Lord on the Damascus road.

But God set him apart and revealed His Son in Paul to preach to the Gentiles.

He went away to Arabia before he went to Jerusalem to consult with other apostles.

Then he returned to Damascus.

Three years later, he went to Jerusalem and stayed with Cephas, Peter, for fifteen days.

 This might have been when Barnabas took him to the apostles, but only Peter and James.

Verse 21 says he went to Syria and Cilicia. Tarsus is in Cilicia.

The churches in Judea glorified God when they heard of his salvation.

NOTE: Watch your time here if your group wants to discuss how the events of Galatians fit into the events of Acts.

1 Corinthians 15:1-5

He preached the gospel he received, the gospel about Jesus' death and resurrection.

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Paul was a blasphemer, persecutor, and violent aggressor (ESV—insolent opponent) until he was shown mercy and grace by the Lord who then put / appointed him in service.

He considered himself the foremost of sinners because he tried to destroy the church.

2 Timothy 1, 8-9; 4:6-8, 18

Paul wrote this near the end of his life. He was in prison because he preached the gospel of Jesus Christ. He was headed for the Lord's heavenly kingdom.

Verses 23-30

When was this and what happened?

This might have been when Saul returned to Damascus after the three years in Arabia. He discovered the Jews' plot to kill him, but his disciples helped him escape the city by night, and he went to Jerusalem.

Then Saul tried to associate with / join the disciples in Jerusalem, but they were all afraid of him. So Barnabas, the son of encouragement, took Saul to the apostles and told them about him.

He spoke boldly in Jesus' name in Jerusalem until some Hellenistic Jews attempted to kill him. Then he was taken to Caesarea and sent to Tarsus.

Verse 31

How does this verse relate to Acts 1:8? Refer to the "Map of Israel."

The church in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria
had peace
was being built up
was going on / walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit
continued to increase / multiply

Verses 32-43

Who is the last part of this chapter about? What are the events?

Peter was going through those regions—Judea, Galilee, and Samaria.

He went to Lydda and healed a man paralyzed for eight years. People in Lydda and Sharon turned to the Lord.

Peter was called to Joppa because a disciple died. When he got there, he prayed and raised her from the dead. As a result of hearing about that, many believed in the Lord.

The chapter ends with Peter staying in Joppa with a tanner named Simon.

Ask what a possible theme is for this chapter.

Saul saw the Lord on Damascus road; Peter healed in Lydda, raised Tabitha in Joppa

To end your discussion, you can ask your group what lessons for life they are learning

- from the apostles' lives
- from Saul's conversion
- from seeing how the Lord grew His church
- about the Holy Spirit and power
- about witnessing

**ACTS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 8**

Lesson emphasis:

- Acts 10–12

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember as the main points of Acts 1–9. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart if they need reminders. And direct them to the “Map of Israel” and “The Roman World in the Time of Acts” as visual aids for this discussion.

Jesus promised the apostles that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit
power
Jesus’ witnesses
in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, remotest part / the end of the earth

God poured forth / out His Holy Spirit on His bondslaves / servants.
The apostles witnessed, the Lord added, and the church began and grew in Jerusalem.

The Jewish Council commanded the apostles to stop speaking in Jesus’ name, but they couldn’t stop. Stephen was stoned to death. Persecution began against the Jerusalem church, and Saul was part of it.

While persecuting the church, he saw the Lord and was saved.
He also witnessed about Jesus.

As a result, all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. They preached the word where they went. Even Samaritans became part of the church.

Peter is the main character in these chapters. He witnessed on Pentecost and many Jews were saved. He witnessed to the Council and they wanted to kill him. He prayed and laid hands on the Samaritans for them to receive the Holy Spirit and become part of the church.

Peter even raised someone from the dead. Chapter 9 ends with him in Joppa.

ACTS 10

Verses 1-8

How does this chapter begin? Tell them to look at the list they made about the Gentiles.

An Italian centurion named Cornelius saw a vision. Although a Gentile, Cornelius
Was a devout man who feared God, as did his whole household
Gave alms to the Jewish people

Prayed continually
God answered in the vision.

He was told what to do—send to Joppa for Peter.

Verses 9-16

Who and where is this about?

The next day Peter, at Simon’s house in Joppa, also had a vision while he prayed. Three times he saw the same thing. He was told to eat unclean things because what God cleanses is no longer unholy / common.

You might ask your group if there are people who they would rather not be sent to and why.

Verses 17-33

What happened?

Peter was perplexed about the meaning of his vision.
The men sent by Cornelius arrived at Simon’s gate.

The Spirit told Peter to go with the men without misgivings / hesitation because He sent them. The men told Peter who sent them and why.

The next day they left Joppa. The following day they were at Caesarea with Cornelius and the other Gentiles he had invited to hear Peter. Peter understood what the vision meant and told the Gentiles that God showed him no man was unclean. He told them he was sent and asked for the reason.

Cornelius answered by explaining his vision to Peter and said they wanted to hear what the Lord commanded him to speak.

Verses 34-43

What did Peter say?

He witnessed about Jesus, but began by saying God is not partial. Anyone from any nation who fears God and does what is right is welcome / acceptable to Him.

This message has the same essentials as those in Acts 2–8, but also has different elements to it. The difference is because of who he spoke to.

The essentials about Jesus are the same—His death and resurrection.
These Gentiles were aware of Jesus because they lived in Israel.

Peter did not say the Gentiles put Jesus to death, like he had told the Jews in Jerusalem. He said “they”—those particular Jews put Him to death.

Peter explained that there were chosen witnesses to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Then he said those witnesses had been ordered / commanded by God to preach and testify that Jesus is the one appointed by God to judge the living and the dead. That has not been in any of the other witnessing in Acts so far.

Although Peter didn't quote from the Old Testament, he referred to the prophets. These Gentiles would have been familiar with or at least heard about the prophets because they lived among Jews in Israel.

Peter didn't call these Gentiles to repent, but to believe. It seems from the description of them that they already had repentant hearts. They were devout, God-fearing, and doing what was right.

Those who believe receive the same thing that those who repent receive—forgiveness of sins. Repentance and belief are both part of salvation.

You might ask your group if they always give the same message when witnessing to people. Do they need to listen more carefully to the Holy Spirit, as Peter did, for the specifics toward their audience?

Verses 44-48

What happened while Peter was speaking?

The Holy Spirit fell on all listening to Peter, and they spoke in tongues.

Then they were baptized in water in Jesus' name.

The Jewish believers were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles also. They knew it because they heard them speak in tongues.

This happened the same way as in Acts 2 when the Jews first received the Holy Spirit.

Verse 45—Holy Spirit poured out on Gentiles “also” (ESV—even on the Gentiles)

Verse 47—received the Holy Spirit “just as we did / have”

There is a question in the lesson asking if the Jewish believers should have been amazed by the Gentiles' conversion. Ask what your group learned from the cross-references.

Genesis 12:1-3

God promised Abram that all families of the earth would be blessed in him. Jesus descended from Abram.

Paul later wrote in some of his letters about the Gentiles being saved.

Galatians 3:8-9, 23-29

Paul quoted the promise from Genesis 12 and said it meant God would justify the Gentiles by faith. Those of faith, who believe in Jesus, are blessed with Abraham the believer / man of faith.

All baptized into Christ are one in Him.
There is neither Jew nor Gentile; now all are one.

Romans 1:16

The order was Jew first, then salvation to the Greek—another term for Gentile. That's the order in Acts.

Ephesians 2:11-22; 3:4-9

Gentiles were also called uncircumcision—a term used in Acts too.
They were far off but brought near by Christ.
Now Jew and Gentile are being built together into God's dwelling in the Spirit.
Gentiles are fellow members of the body, the church.

Ask what your group noted on their At a Glance chart as a possible theme for Acts 10.

Peter witnessed at Caesarea, Holy Spirit poured on Gentiles

ACTS 11

Verses 1-18

How does this chapter continue from Acts 10?

Peter went to Jerusalem to explain the orderly sequence of the Gentiles receiving God's word. Some of the Jews, circumcised, took issue with / criticized him for going to the uncircumcised.

Peter gave the details of his vision and that the Spirit told him to go with the men from Cornelius. Verse 14 includes an additional statement associated with Cornelius' vision. The angel told him he would hear words / a message by which he and his household would be saved.

Peter then gave the details of what happened as he began speaking the message.
The Holy Spirit fell on them "just as He did upon / on us at the beginning."
Then He equated this with the Gentiles being "baptized with the Holy Spirit."
God gave them the same "gift" as He gave to us also.

The same thing happened to the Gentiles as happened to the Jews in Acts 2.
God granted to the Gentiles the repentance leading to life.

All these terms describe salvation.

How does this compare with the other uses of “baptized with the Holy Spirit”? Discuss the cross-references.

Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; and Mark 1:8

John the Baptist said One was coming after him who would baptize with the Holy Spirit—that one was Jesus. He poured forth / out the Spirit, Acts 2:33.

John 1:33

John identified Jesus as the one who baptizes in / with the Holy Spirit.

Matthew and Luke also say He will baptize with fire. In the context of both these passages, fire is associated with judgment, wrath. Those who believe in Jesus are baptized with the Holy Spirit, and those who don’t with fire.

Acts 1:4-8

Jesus told the eleven they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit—the Holy Spirit would come on them. That happened on Pentecost.

Acts 2:4, 14-18, 32-40

The terms used in this chapter are:

They were filled with the Holy Spirit.

God poured forth / out His Spirit.

Repent and be baptized in Jesus’ name to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

This is the promise for all the Lord calls to Himself.

You—the Jews at Pentecost

Your children—their descendants

Those far off—Gentile believers

1 Corinthians 12:13

Paul wrote to this church of both Jews and Gentiles that they were all baptized by / in one Spirit into one body. All believers drink of the same Spirit.

NOTE: The same Greek preposition is used in all seven references to being baptized “with” or “by” the Holy Spirit. It is transliterated “en” and can be translated “in,” “with,” or “by.”

Ask your group for their conclusions about being “baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Jesus does it.

It is for all the Lord calls to Himself.

All believers are baptized or receive the Holy Spirit. Now, at salvation.

The Spirit makes each believer a part of the church.

Jesus told the Jews ahead of time they would be baptized with the Spirit, Acts 1 and 2.

Peter explained about the Gentiles after they also were baptized with the Spirit, Acts 10–11.

What are the terms that describe what happened to the Gentiles? Note these on a visual aid.

Acts 10:43-47

They believed.
The Holy Spirit was poured out on them.
They received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 11

They were saved.
Holy Spirit fell on them—the same term as in Acts 8:16 and 10:44.
They were baptized with the Holy Spirit.
God gave them the same gift.
He granted them repentance to life.

Ask your group what they learned from Matthew 16 about Peter. What was his part?

Matthew 16:13-20

Jesus said He would give Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Keys unlock.

Peter witnessed to the Jews on Pentecost in Acts 2, and the church began with them.

The Samaritans didn't receive the Holy Spirit until Peter, along with John, was laying hands on them.

Peter witnessed at Cornelius's house to the Gentiles, and they were saved.

He unlocked the kingdom for Israel, Samaritans, and Gentiles.

Lead your discussion back to Acts 11:19-30.

What are these verses about?

The word of God was spreading, first to Jews and then to Gentiles.
A large / great number believed at Antioch in Syria.
Barnabas, the son of encouragement, was sent to them.

He also went to get Saul from Tarsus, and they both were at Antioch for a year teaching the church. This is where disciples were first called Christians.

Some prophets came to Antioch from Jerusalem.
Agabus foretold a famine, which happened during Claudius's reign.
The disciples at Antioch sent relief for the brothers in Judea by Barnabas and Saul.

The Gentiles sent help for Jewish believers. They were one body in Christ.

What is a possible theme for this chapter?

Peter in Jerusalem explained Gentiles' salvation; Barnabas and Saul to Antioch

ACTS 12

Verses 1-17

Who and what are these verses about?

Herod Agrippa had the apostle James, John's brother, killed and put Peter in prison. The church fervently / earnestly prayed for Peter.

The night Herod was to bring him before the people, an angel released him from prison.

Peter thought it was a vision until he found himself out of prison and on a street in the city.

He went to Mary's house, but had to wait outside because Rhoda was too joyful and evidently forgot to open the gate. When he went in, he asked them to report to James and the brethren / brothers. He wanted them to know how he was released from prison. Then he left.

NOTE: In case someone brings it up in your discussion: James in verse 17 was Jesus' brother.

Verses 18-23

What happened when day came?

Herod searched for Peter, but couldn't find him. He had the guards executed.

Herod went to Caesarea and set a time to deliver an address to the people of Tyre and Sidon who were asking for peace.

Because he didn't give glory to God when the people called him a god, an angel of the Lord struck Herod. He was eaten by worms and died / breathed his last. Relate this to Acts 10:25-26.

NOTE: Some might want to share what they read in commentaries about this. Herod might have suffered terribly for about five days before his death.

Verses 24-25

How does this chapter end?

Even with the king persecuting the church, God's word continued to grow / increase, multiply.

Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch from taking what the church sent for relief to Jerusalem.

John, also called Mark, returned from Jerusalem with them. He was Mary's son, verse 12.

Ask what your group put on their At a Glance chart as a theme for this chapter.

Herod killed James, imprisoned Peter; God struck Herod, and he died

To end this last discussion of Acts Part 1, ask your group what the Lord has spoken to them from this study. Give them time to share what they understand about:

witnessing
the Holy Spirit
God's power within believers
the church
repentance
baptism
salvation

You might ask how Matthew 28:19-20 applies to them.