

## Introduction

The gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, both written by Luke, together make a two-volume history of the early Christian church. The Acts of the Apostles begins in the closing hours of Jesus' earthly ministry and records the story of the church from its remarkable beginning on the Day of Pentecost to the imprisonment in Rome of its greatest missionary. During those three decades, the church expanded from a small group of Jewish believers gathered in Jerusalem to thousands of believers in dozens of congregations throughout the Roman world.

Acts is a book of both history and theology, emphasizing the doctrinal truths concerning salvation. Jesus of Nazareth is boldly proclaimed as Israel's long-awaited Messiah, and that truth is ably defended by Peter and Paul using texts from the Old Testament that would have been familiar to Jewish audiences.

This year we are memorizing Ephesians 2. This week's verse is Ephesians 2:8:  
"For by grace you have been saved through faith;  
and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God..."

## Day One

Read Acts 1; **Restoration? Not Yet.**

**Note:** Acts 1:1–11 deals with the forty days between the resurrection of Christ and His ascension.

1. From Acts 1:6, what was the expectation or hope of the disciples following the resurrection of Jesus Christ?
  - a. How did Jesus respond to the disciples' question?
  
2. According to verses 8–9, what *did* Jesus say would happen next to advance the redemptive plan?
  
3. Read Isaiah 2:1–4, 4:2–6, and 60:1–7; Amos 9:11–15; and Micah 4:1–5. In light of those texts, how would you respond to those who believe that the kingdom came at Pentecost?
  
4. According to Philippians 4:8–9 and Titus 2:11–14, what are some things believers are to do as they await the coming kingdom?
  - a. What would that look like practically in your life today?

## Day Two

Read Acts 2:1–21; **The Coming of the Holy Spirit**

1. From Acts 2:1–4, what enabling did the disciples receive on the Day of Pentecost?
  - a. According to Acts 2:1, what event was taking place in Jerusalem? Why do you think this was significant?

2. From Acts 2:14–15 and Luke 24:46–49, what did Peter want to make plain to the Jews that they were witnessing?
3. To what future event does Acts 2:17–21, in which Peter quoted from Joel 2:28–32, refer?
  - a. What does that coming day mean to you personally? Does the pattern of your life and your priorities reflect your anticipation of that day?
4. According to Acts 2:21, considered to be the climax of Peter’s quote from the prophet Joel, what was the purpose of the time following Christ’s ascension, including the time in which we live today? Do you acknowledge that reality in your interactions with unbelievers?
  - a. How can encourage those around you, whether family or friends, co-workers, or neighbors, to fulfill their purpose in Christ?

## Day Three

*Read Acts 2:22–41; **Jesus at the Lord’s Right Hand***

1. In Acts 2:23, what important information about God’s character and plan did Peter make that was crucial for the Jews to hear and understand?
2. In verses 25–28 Peter quoted a prophetic passage from Psalm 16:8–11. In that passage, what did David prophesy would take place?
3. According to verses 34–35, what is Jesus doing presently?
4. From verses 37–42, what was the response of those who heard Peter?
  - a. From verse 38, what was the heart of Peter’s gospel message?
5. **Dig Deeper:** In verse 39, how can you reconcile Peter’s use of the word “all” in the first half of the verse with the words “as many as” in the second half?

## Day Four

*Read Acts 2:42–47: **The Fellowship of Believers***

**Note:** “This was really a church, nothing more and nothing less. Its life was completely defined by the devotion to those spiritual duties which make up the unique identity of the church. Nothing outside the living Lord, the Spirit, and the Word define life for the church. This church, though not



# Women of Grace

• Lesson 8 • The Founding of the Church •

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5. As you reflect on this week's lesson and consider the work of the Holy Spirit, the purpose of the church and your role in it, then take time to thank the Lord for what you have received, and determine how you can better serve the church with excellence and joy.

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Niednagel Adapted from Every Woman's Grace at Grace Community Church of Sun Valley, CA November 9, 2016