

BOOK OF ACTS — CHAPTER 1 (Week 2)

Acts 1 — “The Church Between Ascension and Pentecost”

Big Idea

Acts 1 teaches that the church is a worshiping, praying community under the reign of the ascended Christ—waiting not in passivity, but in obedience—preparing to bear witness through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Key Text

Acts 1:1–26

Purpose of Acts 1

Acts 1 is the bridge between the Gospel story and the mission of the church. Jesus has risen, ascended, and reigns as Lord. The church’s calling is clarified: Spirit-empowered witness to Christ until he returns.

Outline of Acts 1

1. Prologue: Jesus continues his work (1:1–5)
2. The mission: Witness by the Spirit (1:6–8)
3. The ascension: Jesus enthroned (1:9–11)
4. The waiting church: prayer and unity (1:12–14)
5. The restored leadership: Matthias chosen (1:15–26)

Major Themes in Acts 1

1. Jesus is alive and still leading his church (1:1–5)

- Acts is “all that Jesus began to do and teach” (1:1)
- The implication: Jesus has not stopped acting—he reigns and directs his mission
- The church does not invent its purpose; it receives it from Christ

2. The kingdom shapes the church’s mission (1:6–8)

- The disciples ask about the restoration of Israel (1:6)
- Jesus does not deny the kingdom—he redirects them
- The timing belongs to the Father (1:7)
- The task belongs to the church: “You will be my witnesses” (1:8)

Key point: The church is not called to speculation about the end times, but to faithful witness until the end comes.

3. The Spirit gives power for witness (1:8)

- Power is not primarily for personal spiritual experience
- Power is for mission: testimony to Jesus in word and life
- The Spirit forms the church into a public, courageous, holy community

4. The ascension is enthronement, not absence (1:9–11)

- Jesus is taken up bodily and visibly
- He is exalted as Lord and reigns now
- The angels promise: “This Jesus...will come in the same way” (1:11)

Key point: The church lives between two realities: Jesus reigns now, and Jesus will return.

5. The church waits through prayer, unity, and obedience (1:12–14)

- The first “church meeting” is a prayer meeting

- They devote themselves to prayer (1:14)
- Unity is not optional—it is preparation for mission
- They wait as an act of obedience, not hesitation

Corrective ecclesiology: Acts 1 shows the church is not a social club. It is a Spirit-dependent, worshiping community preparing for mission.

6. The church takes responsibility for its calling (1:15–26)

- Peter leads with Scripture and discernment
- Judas' betrayal is tragic, but it does not derail God's plan
- Matthias is chosen to restore the Twelve (symbolic of renewed Israel)
- Their leadership is anchored in being witnesses of the resurrection (1:21–22)

Key point: The church's leaders are not celebrities or managers—they are witnesses, servants, and stewards of Christ's mission.

Key Verses to Highlight

- Acts 1:1 — Jesus continues his work
- Acts 1:8 — Spirit-empowered witness
- Acts 1:11 — Promise of Christ's return
- Acts 1:14 — Devotion to prayer
- Acts 1:22 — Resurrection witness as apostolic foundation

Discussion Questions

1. What does Acts 1 teach about what the church should be doing “while we wait”?
2. Why does Jesus connect the Spirit's power to witness rather than comfort?
3. How does the ascension shape the way we understand Jesus' authority today?
4. What does Acts 1 reveal about the role of prayer in the mission of the church?

ACTS BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 2 TAKE-HOME

Acts 1:1–26 — “The Church Between Ascension and Pentecost”

Big Idea

Acts 1 teaches us that the church is a worshiping and praying community under the reign of the ascended Christ—waiting not in passivity, but in obedience—preparing to bear witness through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Key Passage

Acts 1:1–26 — Read it again this week (slowly and prayerfully).

Key Verse

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses...” — Acts 1:8

What We Learned This Week

1. **Jesus is alive and still leading his church (Acts 1:1–5).** Acts is not a story about a church trying hard on its own. It’s the continuation of what Jesus began to do and teach—now carried forward through his people.
2. **The Spirit’s power is for witness (Acts 1:6–8).** Jesus redirects the disciples away from speculation and toward mission. The church’s calling is not to predict the future, but to proclaim Christ until he returns.
3. **The ascension means Jesus reigns now (Acts 1:9–11).** Jesus is not absent—he is enthroned. The church lives between two great realities: Jesus reigns now, and Jesus will return.
4. **Waiting is not wasting (Acts 1:12–14).** Before Pentecost, the early church devoted themselves to prayer and unity. Their waiting was obedience and preparation, not hesitation.
5. **The church takes responsibility for its mission (Acts 1:15–26).** The apostles act with Scripture, wisdom, and humility as Matthias is chosen. Leadership in the church is rooted in being witnesses to the resurrection.

Themes to Watch For in Acts

- Jesus’ lordship and authority
- Spirit-empowered witness
- Prayer as the engine of mission
- Unity and obedience before growth
- The gospel advancing through hardship
- The church as God’s new covenant people

Reflection Questions (choose 1–2)

1. What does Acts 1 teach us about what the church should be doing “while we wait”?
2. Why does Jesus connect power with witness instead of comfort?
3. How does the ascension shape the way you think about Jesus’ authority today?
4. What would change in your life if you truly believed you were called to be Christ’s witness?

Practice for the Week

Daily Prayer (Spiritual + Missional): “Lord Jesus, you reign now. Fill me with your Spirit. Make me a faithful witness—through my words, my holiness, and my love. Open one door this week for me to point someone to you.”

Optional Challenge

Write down one person who needs Jesus. Pray for them by name each day this week, and ask God for an opportunity to encourage them, pray with them, or invite them to church.

Next Week

Acts 2:1–13 — “Pentecost: The Spirit Comes and the Church Is Born”