

The
Acts
of the Apostles



**PRAYER AND THE
HOLY SPIRIT UNITE
GOD'S PEOPLE**

ACTS 1:12-2:13

BOOK OF ACTS

- Luke is the author of the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts.
- Most likely the book was written before A.D. 64, when Paul was executed.
- Acts 1-7 - witnesses in Jerusalem
- Acts 8-12 - witnesses in Judea and Samaria
- Acts 13-28 - witnesses to the ends of the earth

**GOD'S PEOPLE GATHER
IN UNITY OF FAITH,
PURPOSE AND PRAYER**

ACTS 1:12-26

LORD'S PEOPLE (12-14)

- Immediately after Jesus ascends, His disciples respond in obedience to His commands.
- They return to Jerusalem where they wait for God to send His Spirit.
- In this gathering, we see the first stones of God's Church laid upon the foundation of the risen Christ.
- Among His people is a unity of faith and action that become hallmarks of the Christian witness.

LORD'S PEOPLE (12-14)

- In verses 12–14, we discern three important characteristics of God's people:
- They gather in unity of what they believe; they agree upon their common purpose; and they commit to praying together in faithful anticipation of what God promises to accomplish.
- All of this is done in obedience to the words of Jesus Christ, upon whom their new identity is built.

LORD'S PEOPLE (12-14)

- In verse 13, the first characteristic of God's people we see is the shared beliefs that knit these people together. Throughout Jesus' ministry, we saw crowds of varying levels of intimacy follow Jesus around from town to town.
- Jesus had a close group of 12 disciples; He had a closer group of three (Peter, John and James); and He also taught larger crowds of people who didn't receive the same depth of training as others.

LORD'S PEOPLE (12-14)

- In verse 14, we also see that the early church, gathering in obedience to Jesus' commands, is unified because of their shared purpose.
- Jesus has promised the indwelling of God's presence, and they gather to pray that this incredible promise would come true.
- Not only are they unified in their desire for the Spirit, but they are unified in their understanding that Christians pour their lives into prayer.

LORD'S PEOPLE (12-14)

- Verse 14 affirms the prominence of prayer within the community of Christ's disciples.
- These moments in the first chapter of Acts set the tone for how God's people continue to live throughout the rest of the book.
- God advances His glorious plan of salvation through the faithful obedience, prayer and actions of His Church.

LORD'S WORD (15-22)

- In verses 15–26, Luke shows how the Church relies upon God's guidance and acts in faith as He is leading them.
- Previously, we saw Jesus' followers obey His instructions.
- They return to Jerusalem and wait for the pouring out of God's Spirit, a major event that has been anticipated since the prophets (Isaiah 44:3 and Joel 2:28–29).

LORD'S WORD (15-22)

- Verses 15–20 record Peter's leading the people's reliance upon God's written Word.
- He calls their attention to the guidance of two ancient passages of writings—the Psalms, one of Israel's greatest sources of inspired wisdom, and prophecy.
- He quotes first from Psalm 69 to discern God's perspective on the consequences due to Judas.

LORD'S WORD (15-22)

- In verses 21–22, the disciples seek to make their decision based on the reliable facts of Jesus' ministry.
- When considering the qualifications for Judas' replacement, Peter advises them to select one who can testify to the truth of Jesus' life, death and Resurrection.
- This would have to be a leader who witnessed the full scope of His ministry, from baptism to ascension.

LORD'S SOVEREIGNTY

- In verses 23–26, the first Christians take action. They know God has given them written wisdom and guarded their standards for decision-making.
- They have relied on prayer, discernment and truthfulness and now trust the results to God's will.
- The act of casting lots is not an unusual behavior in the life of Jewish Christians. They do not have the Spirit inside of them yet.

**THE CHURCH IS BUILT
ON JESUS AND FILLED BY
THE HOLY SPIRIT**

ACTS 2:1-13

SYMBOLS OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING (1-4)

- Luke describes an incredible movement of God that occurs as the followers of Jesus meet on the Jewish holiday of Pentecost (verse 1).
- Verse 2 - Luke speaks of a loud, rushing sound similar to that of a violent wind, and in verse 3 Luke describes an image like fire appearing over the heads of all the disciples.
- Verse 4 - the disciples also begin to speak in other languages.

SYMBOLS OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING (1-4)

- Both Old Testament examples use similar imagery to describe the events.
- Notice that both of these examples demonstrate God's filling a place of worship with His presence.
- In John 4:24, however, Jesus speaks of God's desire to move worship directly into the hearts of His people rather than providing restricted access to Himself through a single building or location.

SYMBOLS OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING (1-4)

- This moment is so spectacular because it demonstrates God's presence coming to dwell among His people in the presence of the nations.
- This is not the first time in Israel's history when God's presence came to dwell among His people, and Luke's choice of language is not accidental.
- There are two Old Testament examples that are similar to this:

SYMBOLS OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING (1-4)

- Old Testament examples;
 - God “moved Himself” into the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34–38).
 - God “took residence” within Israel’s temple (2 Chronicles 7:1–3).

SYMBOLS OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING (1-4)

- Because of the victory Jesus gained over sin and death, God can now dwell directly within His people (through the Holy Spirit).
- We have become God's new temple of worship.
- In verse 4 Luke makes sure to point out that it is the new indwelling of the Holy Spirit that sparks this incredible event.

RESULTS OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING (5-13)

- Here, Luke describes the incredibly diverse crowd of people who witness the events.
- Not only has God moved in a supernaturally visible way, but the disciples' behavior is being displayed before a crowd of various languages from "every nation under heaven" (verse 5).
- Incredibly, the crowds are able to understand the gospel message in their own languages.

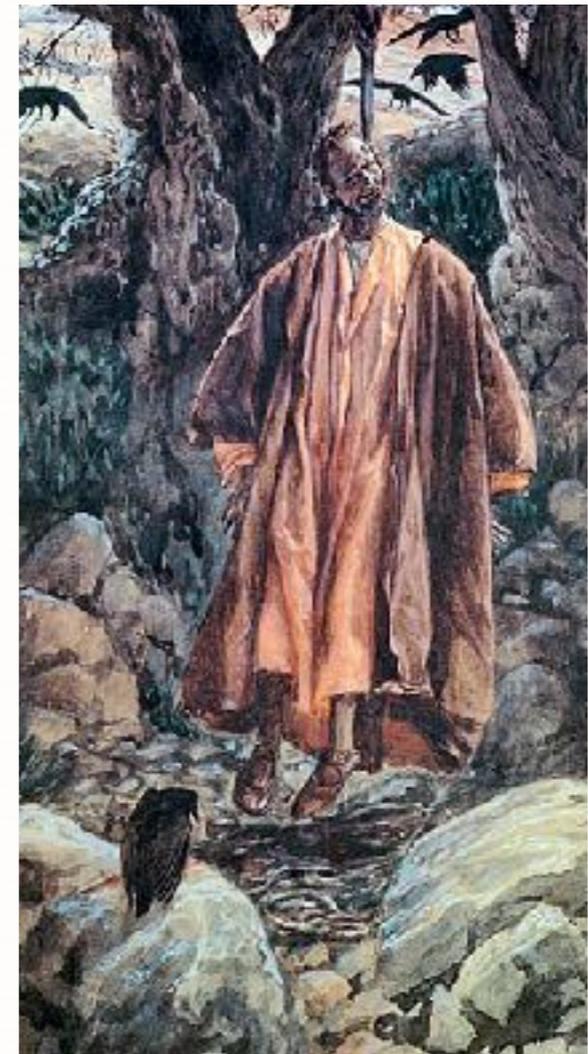
RESULTS OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING (5-13)

- Verses 12-13 show the two opposing reactions reactions from the people:
 - In verse 12, many are amazed and seek further answers regarding these miraculous acts of God.
 - In verse 13 other members of the crowd ignore the supernatural events happening before their eyes and simply mock the disciples for drinking too much wine.

PROBLEM PASSAGES IN ACTS

DEATH OF JUDAS

- This is often seen as the greatest contradiction in the New Testament.
- Matthew 27:5 clearly teaches that Judas hung himself.
- However, Acts 1:18 says Judas fell and “his body burst open.”



DEATH OF JUDAS

- Explanation: Judas hung himself on a precipice over the valley of Hinnom.
- The rope gave way, his body fell, and burst open and was mangled as described in Acts.



CAST LOTS

- Acts 1:26 - they cast lots for apostle
- The practice of casting lots is mentioned 70 times in the Old Testament and 7 times in the New Testament.
- The New Testament does not instruct Christians to use casting lots to help with decision-making.
- We have the Word of God, as well as the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide us, there is no reason to be using games of chance to make decisions.

APOSTLE

- What is the difference between apostle and disciple?
- Apostle - from the Greek word “apostolos” which means “a messenger,” and “one sent forth” Acts 1:8.
- Disciple - from the Greek word “mathēteuō” and it means a “student, learner,” or “pupil.”
- Apostles were those who saw the risen Christ and were sent out to bring the Good News to the world.

CAST LOTS

- Acts 1:21-22 - shows the qualifications of the apostle Mathias who was picked by the other apostles.
- He must be “one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.”

HOLY SPIRIT

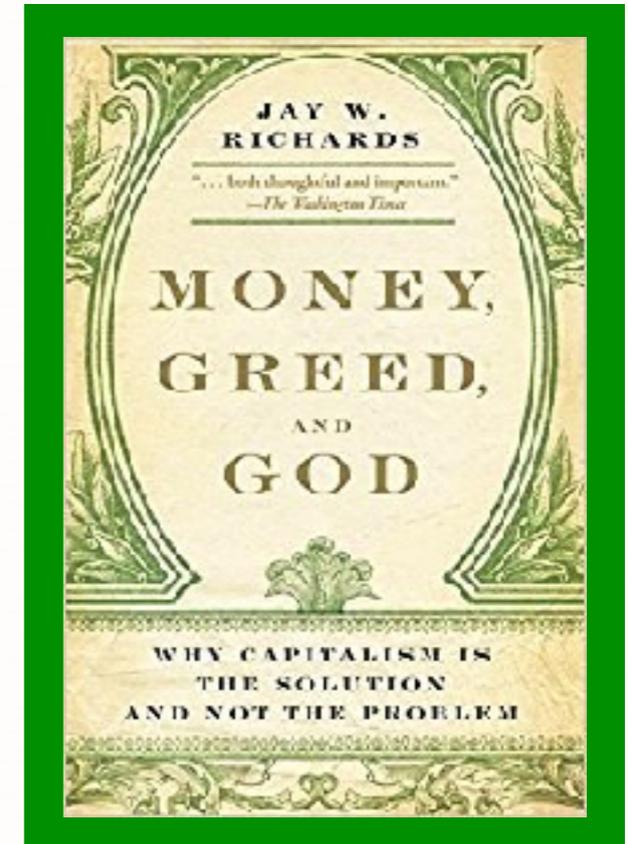
- They were filled with Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4)
- The Holy Spirit indwells us at the moment of conversion.
- In the Old Testament, the Spirit would come and go from the saints, empowering them for service but not necessarily remaining with them (Judges 15:14; 1 Chronicles 12:18; Psalm 51:11; Ezekiel 11:5).

HOLY SPIRIT

- The indwelling Spirit confirms to the believer that he or she belongs to the Lord and is an heir of God and fellow-heir with Christ (Romans 8:15–17).
- The indwelling of the Spirit is called the baptism of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- The indwelling Spirit produces the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23) and also provides spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11).

HELD IN COMMON

- The early Christians in Jerusalem held all things in common (Acts 2:44).
- Was the early church communist? Their actions are further explained in Acts 4:32-35.
- Jay Richards, *Money Greed and God*, provides some needed perspective.



HELD IN COMMON

- First, there is no talk of class warfare nor any hint that private property is immoral.
- Second, the state is nowhere in sight. This is done in the church in Jerusalem.
- Third, Peter later condemns Ananias and Sapphira for lying when they owned the property.
- Fourth, the communal life of the early church is never made the norm for all Christians everywhere.

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