# Introduction to Acts

**Authorship:** Like the Gospel of Luke, the book of *Acts* does not identify its inspired writer. Yet Christian tradition uniformly affirms that Luke wrote both books. Important evidence for Luke’s authorship is found in three “we sections” in which “we” and “us” occur (16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16). At these times, the writer was evidently an eyewitness of Paul’s ministry. Through a process of elimination, Luke appears to be the most likely associate of Paul to have written these materials. And if Luke wrote the ‘we sections,” he must have written the rest of *Acts*, for the Greek style and vocabulary are noticeably from the same author.

**Timeline:** *Acts* covers about 30 years, the critical period in which Christianity was being established. It begins with Jesus’ resurrection and ministry, which may be dated around A.D. 30, and ends with Paul’s imprisonment in Rome, about A.D. 62. However, Luke’s writing is not specific enough to precisely date either event or those occurring between the two. With the understanding that these dates are approximate, a likely chronology of the events in this book would appear as follows:

Date Event Reference

A.D. 30 Jesus’ ascension and birth of the church in Jerusalem Acts 1-2

A.D. 33 Stephen’s martyrdom and Paul’s conversion Acts 7, 9

A.D. 47-48 Paul’s first missionary journey Acts 13-14

A.D. 49 Council in Jerusalem on circumcision and the law Acts 15

A.D. 49-52 Paul’s second missionary journey Acts 16-18

A.D. 52-57 Paul’s third missionary journey Acts. 19-21

A.D. 57 Paul’s arrest in Jerusalem Acts 21

A.D. 57-59 Paul’s imprisonment in Caesarea Acts 23-24

A.D. 60-62 Paul’s imprisonment in Rome Acts 28

**Themes:** The Father is the Sender of the Holy Spirit. *Acts* shows that from the beginning of Christianity, Jesus Christ has been the Center of proclamation. His life, death, and resurrection are the essence of the good news. Above all, this book reveals the Holy Spirit more extensively than any other book. All who believe receive the gift of the Spirit. Particularly, by tracing the spread of Christianity from Jews to Samaritans and then to Gentiles, *Acts* shows that the offer of salvation extends to all people.

Again and again in this book, the essence of the Christian message is presented:

* Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of Scripture by His deeds and life.
* He was crucified.
* God raised Him from the dead.
* The necessary human response is to repent of sins and believe in Him.
* Those who do so receive God’s good gift of the Spirit.
* Believers are to live holy lives and do God’s will.

Acts outline for the year

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Topic | Key verse | Additional notes, dates etc… |
| Aug 21-23 | Intro, Acts 1-2 | 1Jn 3:18 | Digital Survey |
| Aug 26-30 | Acts 3-4 | Acts 1:7-8 |  |
| Sept 2-6 | Acts 5-6 | Acts 5:29-30 | 2- labor day |
| Sept 9-13 | Acts 7-8 | Eph 4:10-12 | Spiritual gifts Inventory, Test 1-7 – Sept 13, Begin Video Project |
| Sept 16-20 | Acts 9-10 | Acts 10:44-47 |  |
| Sept 23-27 | Acts 11-12 | Eph 1:17-19a |  |
| Sept 30 – Oct 4 | Acts 13-14 | Acts 13:46-48 | Test 2: 8-14 – Oct 4 |
| Oct 7 - 11 | Acts 15-16 | Acts 16:30-32 | Project due – Oct 11 |
| Oct 14 – 18 | PSAT Testing |  |  |
| Oct 21 – 25 | Acts 17-18 | Acts 17:26-27 |  |
| Oct 28-Nov 1 | Acts 19 – 20 | Jn 14:12-13 | Test 3 – 15-20 – Nov 1 |
| Nov 408 | Acts 21 – 22 | Acts 21:12-15 |  |
| Nov 11 – 15 | Acts 23-24 | Luke 12:11-12 |  |
| Nov 18 -22 | Acts 25-26 | Acts 26:22-23 | Present project 2 (Web / Pamphlet) |
| Nov 25 – 29 | Thanksgiving |  |  |
| Dec 2 – 6 | Acts 27 | Matt 6:31-34 |  |
| Dec 9 – 13 | Acts 28 | Matt 28:19-20 | Test 4 / Review – Dec 11 |
| Dec 16 – 20 | Review / finals |  |  |