

Acts: The Early Chapters

iServe Africa

Ministry Training Course 2

6 – 13 Dec 2014.

Introducing Acts

- Luke and his sequel. An orderly account for Theophilus.
- Acts or Words? What Jesus began to *do* and to *teach*.
- A Waiting community - For Christ.
- A Praying community – To God.
- A Listening community – For the Word.
- A Human community – Weak, Tensions etc.

Day 2: Spirit & Word

- The Day of Pentecost. A Celebration of Grain Harvest & Lawgiving.
- Tongues of fire, tongues of men. Filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Babel redeemed? Every Nation Under Heaven.
- The Holy Spirit leads to the Word.
- Preaching Christ from the OT: Peter's Sermon
- Christ is the LORD God and, the risen Messiah, the saving name

Emerging Thoughts

- The Holy Spirit is given to the church. To a community.
- Might we expect personal advent of the Holy Spirit? What might be the danger of expecting 'second blessing' rather than daily infilling?
- A caution on babbling. 1 Cor 14 – personal edification. Pagan roots? Value? Genuine?
- The Spirit Filled Community of Acts 2:42 – 47 – A model church?

Day 3: Sign & Sermon

- The Jesus Movement within Judaism
- A brief history of 3 temples. [Solomon, Zerrubabel & Herod] and the Great Temple.
- A beautiful temple where the cripple could not 'meet God' in a sense.
- Grace: Much more than we ask for. Who knows what they want?
- A miraculous healing! Praise & Glory to God!
- The shift of focus: from the miracle to the gospel
- In His Name: A Sermon on Christ.

Sign & Sermon... Emerging Thoughts

- Silver & Gold we have none...excuse for Christian stinginess?
- Miracles – Rare or commonplace?
- Signs – Direction or Arrival?
- Miracles or Blessings? The risk of missing out on the great miracle and the greatest blessing/curse.
- A New Moses is Here – Miracles concentrated around Redemption.
- Greater works? What is the purpose of miracles?

Day 4: Persecution & Prayer

- The main actor – Holy Spirit, Apostles or Satan? [Stott]
- A Mention of Jewish Sects. The growth of the gospel in spite of opposition.
- A call to courage: In the Name of Jesus.
- Exclusive Claims of Christ – Salvation is found in no other name. The Rock of Offense.
- Ignorant & Unlearned men – who had been with Jesus.
- Strength in weakness – fervent prayer.
- A summary of the gospel community- Spirit Filled, Jesus Proclaiming, United & Loving Koinonia.

P&P: Emerging Thoughts

- Boldness & Proclamation.
- Offense in an age of Relativism.
- Persecution & Prosperity Gospel. Temporal Pain Vs Eternal Glory [inordinate fascination with temporal at the expense of eternal].
- Form Vs Substance [Externalities & Character]
- Being and Doing – What is Ministry?
- The place of prayer – inner strength.

Day 5: Fear & Joy

- Unusual warning
- Unusual blessing
- Unchained gospel
- Undeterred witnesses (Obeying God, rather than men).
- Unexpected help
- Unnatural response
 - Counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the name')
 - They Never Stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ

Day 5: Emerging Thoughts

- The Sword of the Spirit – Double edged?
- Still willing to keep going? With all the challenges?
- The Sovereign God – Unexpected Help.
- Joy of Suffering [Paradox]
- What is the Gospel? “on a tree” – taking every opportunity to preach this gospel of propitiation and forgiveness

Service & Word

- A Perfect Gospel Community? Ethnic Strife.
- A Crucial Ministry – Serving Tables.
- A Clear Priority – Preaching & Prayer.

Ongoing Growth of the Faith.

Day 6: Emerging Thoughts

- Growth comes with challenges – Organising ministry in Africa.
- Tensions are part of our human identity and Christians are no exception.
- How do we resolve conflict in a community? Apostles Consulting? Power issues.
- How do we perceive certain roles and the people who do them - home, work or church?