

The story of Jesus Christ and those who chose to follow Him and His Mission

Ruby Martin

Beulah Heights University

Professor Dennis Malone

Written by Luke as a sequel to his Gospel, Acts is an accurate historical record of the early church. But Acts is also a theological book, with lessons and living examples of the work of the Holy Spirit, church relationship and organization, the implications of grace, and the law of love. ~~And~~ **In addition**, Acts is an apologetic work, building a convincing case for the validity of Christ's claims and promises.

The **b**ook of Acts begins with the outpouring of the promised Holy Spirit and the commencement of the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This spirit-inspired evangelism began in Jerusalem and eventually spread to Rome, covering most of the Roman Empire. The gospel first went to the Jews; but they, as a nation, rejected it. A remnant of Jews, of course, gladly received the Good News. But the continual rejection of the gospel by the vast majority of the Jews led to ever-increasing proclamation of the gospel to the Gentiles. This was according to Jesus' plan: the gospel was **to** go from Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (1:8). This, in fact, is the pattern that the Acts narrative follows. The glorious proclamation began in Jerusalem (chapters 1-7), went to Judea (11:19; 13:4 and on to the end of Acts). The second half of Acts is focused primarily on Paul's missionary journeys to many countries north of the Mediterranean Sea. He, with his companions, took the gospel first to the Jews and then the Gentiles. Some of the Jews believed, and many of the Gentiles the Good News with joy. New churches were started, and new believers began to grow in the Christian life.

As you read Acts, put yourself in the place of the disciples - feel with them as they are filled with the Holy Spirit, and thrill with them as they see thousands respond to the gospel message. Sense their commitment as they give every ounce of talent and treasure to Christ. And

as you read, watch the spirit-led boldness of these first-century believers, who through suffering and in the face of death take every opportunity to tell of their crucified and risen Lord.

You have some good thoughts and have supported them well. Be very careful about potential plagiarism. This could be cause for a grade of "F" and disciplinary action by the Institution.

86 / Professor Malone