

Acts 1:1-5

“He Is alive”

(Jesus continues to live in His church through His Spirit.)

“1 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus **began to do and teach**,

Acts teaches us that Jesus is alive with more to do and teach

1. The author of Acts is Luke, the author of the gospel bearing his name.
 - a. While historical critics of Luke-Acts agree that the same person wrote both documents they are not all convinced that it was Luke the companion of Paul. But the tradition of Luke as the author is very old and supported by the data in the book itself.
 - b. Luke traveled with Paul and in this document seems to be defending Paul’s authority by comparing him with Peter.
 - c. He writes to Theophilus (Lover of God). This could have been a specific person or as Origen (a church father of the 2nd century) preferred to see it, a caricature of all who love God. **This book is written to edify Christians so that they might have an orderly understanding of the work of Christ beyond his cross and resurrection.**
2. Christianity is centered in a person (Jesus) not a religious experience, and ethical system, or a philosophy of life. The focus is on what He said and did.

“this man’s religion is worthless.”Jas.1:26

Based on private spiritual experience

Col. 1:18 “Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind.”

Based on ethical discipline

Gal. 3:2 “This is the only thing I want to find out from you; did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?”

Based on religious rituals

I Cor. 1:17 “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, that the cross of Christ should not be made void.”

Based on “cheap” grace

Gal. 5:13 “For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh,”

Christianity is based on the grace of God displayed in Jesus’ work on the cross and our faith in Him.

3. Luke was aware that Jesus’ ministry did not stop with his earthly activity as Jesus of Nazareth. It continued through the Apostles.

“The image of the invisible God” Col.1:15

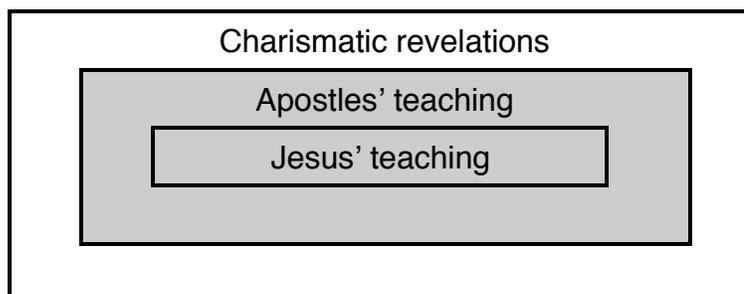
Angel of the Lord	Jesus Christ	The Body of Christ
Visible appearances of God in the OT	The incarnation - Jesus of Nazareth	The Holy Spirit in the church
Old Testament	Gospel of Luke	Acts

4. Luke treated Jesus' life and teaching from a position of real history. He told us the facts as they were a part of the public record – Luke 1:1-2.
 - a. Historical critics would like to downplay the historical value of Luke's writing because of the implications of the miraculous nature of much of the account.
 - b. It is assumed that Luke is selective in what he reports and that his recording of speeches for example, may include paraphrases of the actual talk (which were no doubt much longer than the record in acts).
 - c. **Christianity is uniquely grounded in historical events – especially the resurrection.** Every sermon in Acts centers on the resurrection and repentance. This emphasis is distinct from the modern tendency to base Christian faith on a personal emotional experience or on special life circumstances.
5. Luke also is aware that Jesus' ministry is one of both doing and speaking. The community of the church is no less commissioned.
 - a. The Apostles are teaching propositionally with sign power as they did in the epistles.
 - b. **The church is designed and called to both show and tell, do and teach.**

2 until the day when He was taken up, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders **to the apostles** whom He had chosen. 3 To these He also **presented Himself alive**, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over {a period of} forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Acts teaches us that Jesus is alive with more to do and teach through the Apostles

1. There are two kinds of revelation given through the Apostles both of which are considered an authoritative part of inspired Scripture. **This means that we treat the epistles with the same respect we do the gospels.**



- a. What Jesus said to them.

b. What His Spirit continued to say through them.

Note: We might add a third category of special revelation given to gifted believers in the church and limited to occasional application.

2. The orders given to the apostles were to be instruments in building the body of Christ.

(The 12 (with Paul) **made up a special group of Apostles. The term is used most often in the NT in reference to this group.**)

- a. They were called by Jesus. **Lk.6:13** “He called His disciples to him; and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles.”
- b. They were eye witness to the resurrected Jesus. **Acts.1:21-22** “It is therefore necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us - beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us - one of these should become a witness with us of His resurrection.”, (2:32, 3:15 13:31)
- c. They were anointed to work signs and wonders. **II Cor.12:12** “The signs of a true apostle were performed among you”
- d. They became the Foundation of the church. **Eph.2:20** “having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone.”
- e. They defined the doctrines of the Gospel. **Jn.20:23** “If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any they have been retained.” (Matt.18:18)
- f. Paul was numbered with the twelve. **I Cor.15:9** “For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.” **II Cor.11:5** “For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles.” **Gal.1:17** “nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia,” **I Thess.2:6** “as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.”
- g. They were sent by God. **Lk.11:49** “For this reason also the wisdom of God said, ‘I will send to them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and some they will persecute.’”

3. The resurrection was a physical phenomena as much as his suffering and teaching.

4. “Convincing proofs” is a single term in Greek (from the root – sign or mark) that suggests that the resurrection was notarized in several ways over a long period of time. The atonement for our sins is through the Cross which is notarized by the Resurrection, which is notarized by eye witnesses, which is recorded in the New Testament.

Atonement	The Cross	Resurrection	Eye witnesses	New Testament
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5. **The resurrection of Christ is the basis of our faith** in that it is the rational for the Gospel as preached in the early church. (I Cor.15)

4 And gathering them together, *(the NIV has “eating with them” but this is taken from a margin in the Greek text and not certain)* He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for **what the Father had promised**, “Which,” {He said,} “you heard of from Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you shall be **baptized with the Holy Spirit** not many days from now.”

Acts teaches us that Jesus is alive with more to do and teach through the Apostles and through the Holy Spirit who indwells believers.

1. There is an important order of events in Jesus plan for the Kingdom.
 - a. The Promise of the OT Fathers.
 - b. The Cross
 - c. The Resurrection
 - d. The Coming of the Spirit
2. The Spirit is essential to understanding Acts and the Christian church’s witness.
3. **We should expect to participate in the community of the Spirit** if we are to continue to follow Jesus.
4. Holy Spirit Baptism is the starting point of this story.
5. The baptism with the Spirit is identified with the promise of the Father – which was the advent of the Holy Spirit, which had not yet come to indwell God’s people so as to form the church.
6. Christians have differed in their understanding of the significance of Pentecost.
 - a. Some tend to downplay the dramatic change that it represents believing that the church was in existence long before Pentecost.
 - b. Others tend do over state the baptism, seeing it as an experience subsequent to conversion that divides the body of Christ into two groups.
 - c. We need to be respectful of these different ways of understanding the Spirit’s work.

Lessons

1. **Jesus continues to live in His church, therefore expect Jesus to live through you.**
2. **Jesus’ ministry consists of both what is said and done, therefore give care to your words and your deeds.**
3. **Christianity is grounded in history (more than inner experience, or an ethical system), therefore ground your faith in what happened at the cross and resurrection.**

4. **The Apostles teaching is our link to knowing Jesus**, *therefore study the epistles to understand the Gospels and Old Testament.*
5. **The resurrection of Jesus is at the core of our message**, *therefore find your hope in the power of the resurrected Christ.*