



ACTS 1-7

Term 2 2018

Narrabeen
ST. FAITH'S *Anglican Church*

ACTS

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION FROM KERRY NAGEL				4
STUDY ONE:	Week beginning 30 April	Sermon date 5 / 6 May	THE NEXT PHASE Acts 1:1-11	5
STUDY TWO:	7 May	12 / 13 May	THE PAUSE Acts 1:12-26	9
STUDY THREE:	14 May	19 / 20 May	THE WAITING IS OVER Acts 2:1-21	13
STUDY FOUR:	21 May	26 / 27 May	WHAT PENTECOST PROVES Acts 2:22-47	16
STUDY FIVE:	28 May	2 / 3 June	REFRESHMENT FROM GOD Acts 3:1-26	21
STUDY SIX:	4 June	9 / 10 June	OPPOSITION Acts 4:1-31	25
STUDY SEVEN:	11 June	16 / 17 June	A NEW COMMUNITY Acts 4:32-5:16	28
STUDY EIGHT:	18 June	23 / 24 June	SUFFERING FOR CHRIST ? Acts 5:17-42	32
STUDY NINE:	25 June	30 June /1 July	THE FIRST MARTYR Acts 6 & 7	36

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our studies in 'Acts' for Term 2, 2018. We are following on from our short series in Luke's gospel, looking at what Luke saw as Jesus' continuing Mission, recorded in Acts.

In Acts chapter 1, verse 8, Jesus tells his apostles where they will be witnesses. This is one of the key themes of Acts. Jesus says they are to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and beyond. This term we will just be studying the first 7 chapters of Acts, which is the account of the apostles' witness in Jerusalem.

It is exciting to see how the early church began as Jesus' "unstoppable" gospel spread. Spread, in the face of constant opposition. There are many lessons for us, as Christians in Narrabeen nearly 2000 years later.

We have inherited the same mission as the original apostles. We share the same message. Like them, it will be vital that our lives are consistent with this message. And, like them, we must rely on our Risen Lord Jesus, to "drive" it all. He will not be stopped. His love for the lost is still the same, today.

May we be inspired, as we study 'Acts', to be faithful servants of the gospel in our generation, as the apostles were in theirs.

Kerry Nagel

April 2018

STUDY ONE: The Next Phase

Acts 1:1-11

1/ Getting Started

- a) Have you ever had to organise an event, or plan a "project"? If so, how did you feel? What did you do to 'make it happen'?
Discuss

2/ Acts: Setting the Scene

- a) Read Acts 1:1-3, and then Luke 1:1-4. How are the two books of Luke and Acts connected?

- b) In Acts 1:1, the author says he wrote about what Jesus "began" to do. What, do you think, this tells us about the book of Acts?

3/ The Themes of Acts

- a) Read Acts 1:4-11, From verse 6 what do the disciples think is the "next phase" in God's plan?

- b) What does Jesus say he wants the disciples to do? (v.8) Where will they need to go?

- c) Why do they need to wait in Jerusalem, for the time being?

- d) From verse 3, how has Jesus already equipped them for their task? (In other words, what are they especially qualified to tell people about?)

- e) How might the assurance of verse 11, help the disciples in their task. Discuss.

4/ Getting Personal

- a) What would you say is the "Next Phase" in God's plan for the world, as described in Acts 1:1-11?

- b) How does the Risen Jesus continue to grow his kingdom today, do you think?

- c) What difference should Jesus' "Mission Plan" make to our lives? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY TWO: The Pause

Acts 1:12-26

1/ Getting started

- a) We talked about "Plans" and "Projects" last week. Have you ever had to put a plan "on hold?" Had to press "pause" on a project. If so, why? And, how did you feel? Discuss.

2/ The "Pause" on God's Plan

- a) Read Acts 1:12-17. Where are the believers' – the followers of Jesus – gathered? Why, do you think?

- b) How many are there, and in what way might this be surprising? (v15).

- c) Read Acts 1:18-26. From verses 16 to 22, why, according to Peter, must Judas be "replaced"?

d) What “qualifications” must Judas’ replacement have? (v21-22)

e) Why are these “qualifications” important?

f) From verses 23-26, how is the decision made? (what two steps were involved?)

3/ Getting personal

a) Some people claim that the Christian faith is just a fairy story – “made up”. From Acts 1v3, and Acts 1v22, what event have all the witnesses seen? How might this be important, for us? Discuss.

- b) How did Peter know about God's plans? (v16, v20) What does this tell us, about where we should look, to know God's will? Discuss.

4/ If you have time

- a) What do you think of the apostles' method of deciding between Joseph and Matthias (v23-26)? Is this a model for us? Why or why not?

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY THREE: The Waiting is Over!

Acts 2:1-21

1/ Getting started

- a) Have you ever been surprised or astonished by what someone else has done? If so, what questions come to your mind? Why?

2/ Turning to the Bible

- a) Read Acts 2:1-13 Who do you think gathered? (v1)

- b) From verses 1-3, what did the people feel and see?

- c) From verses 5 to 12, why do those who gather become amazed? (v7)

- d) What conclusion do some people come to? (v13) Why do you think they say this?

- e) Read Acts 2:14-21. What explanation does Peter give for what is going on here?

- f) How does all this “fit” with Jesus’ instructions to the disciples in Acts 1:8.

- g) If the “Last Days” have come (v17), what invitation has become urgent, for the crowds? (v21)

3/ Getting personal

- a) In what way are we different from the apostles? Why might this be important? Discuss.

- b) In what ways are we similar to the apostles?

- c) How do we ‘fit’ in Jesus’ Mission plan, so far? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

1/ Getting Started

- a) Have you ever made a mistake, with unfortunate, even embarrassing, consequences? (eg holiday plans that didn't work out?). Share some of these, and how you felt when your mistake, became obvious.

- b) Today, we meet some people who realise they have made the biggest mistake in history. We are invited to learn from their experience.

2/ Turning to the Bible

- a) Read Acts 2:22 to 24. Peter is explaining what the coming of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost, 2:1-21) proves about Jesus. From verses 22 to 24, what had the people known about Jesus?

- b) What had the people done to Jesus? (v23)

- c) What had God done, in regard to Jesus? (v23-24)

- d) Read Acts 2:25-36. What does God's response prove, about Jesus' identity, according to Peter?

- e) What evidence does Peter give, for this claim about Jesus' identity?

- f) What "mistake" or "error of judgement" does Peter correct, in verse 36?

- g) Read Acts 2:37-41. Why do you think the people in the crowd respond as they do, to Peter's message? (v37) How do you think they are feeling? Discuss.

- h) What does Peter tell them to do, in response? Why? (v38-41)

3/ Getting personal

- a) We were not present at Jesus death, nor at Pentecost. But what do we have in common with the crowds who were there?

- b) What is Peter's "Big Announcement" about Jesus? What difference should this make to us? Discuss.

4/ If you have time.

a) Read Acts 2:42-47, Summarise the practical response of these new Christians, to their experience?

b) Why do you think they act as they do? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

1/ Getting Started

- a) What part of the Christian message is the hardest for your non-Christian friends and family to believe? Why, do you think, they struggle with this? Discuss.

- b) The Jews struggled to believe that Jesus could be the Messiah, back in the time of the apostles. Possibly one stumbling block was his crucifixion. In this chapter, Peter set out evidence for Jesus.

2/ Turning to the Bible

- a) Read Acts 3:1-10. What do we learn about the beggar, in these verses?

- b) Why do you think he had to beg outside the temple?

- c) How is he healed?

- d) Where does he go when he is healed, and why might this be significant?

- e) How does the crowd respond?

- f) Read Acts 3:11-26. How does Peter explain the healing?

- g) What does Peter urge the people in the crowd to do?
(e.g. v19 & v26)

- h) Why does he say they should do this? List as many reasons as you can.

3/ Getting personal

- a) The message Peter gives the crowd here, is similar to that in Chapter 2. List the key elements of the "gospel" Peter announces?

- b) What response should we make to this message? Discuss.

- c) How can this passage help us to faithfully share the gospel? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY SIX: Opposition

Acts 4: 1-31

1/ Getting started

- a) Have you ever been afraid to do something that you felt God wanted you to do? If so, what was it that made you afraid? What did you do? Discuss.

2/ Turning to the Bible

- a) Read Acts 4:1-12. Why do Peter and John get arrested?

- b) When asked to explain what they had done (v7, and recall Ch3:1-10), how do Peter and John reply?

- c) Read Acts 4:13-22. Why do the religious leaders threaten Peter and John?

d) How do Peter and John respond? Why

e) Read Acts 4:23-31. What do the believers pray for, in response to these events? Is this in any way surprising?

3/ Getting personal

a) From your reading of the book of Acts so far, what have you seen the Holy Spirit doing? Give a brief summary.

b) Compare Acts 1:8 with Acts 4:8, 4:31. How has the Holy Spirit helped the apostles?

c) In what ways does the Holy Spirit help us, today? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY SEVEN: A New Community

Acts 4:32 - 5:16

1/ Getting started

- a) Have you experienced great generosity? Has anyone ever been very generous to you? If so, how did you feel? Discuss.

2/ Turning to the Bible

- a) Read Acts 4:32-37. Describe what it would have been like to be a part of the early “community of believers”? How do you think you would have felt? Discuss.

- b) Discuss why you think the early believers acted in these ways.

- c) Read Acts 5:1-11. What was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira?

d) Why do you think they acted as they did?

e) Why do you think God judged them, as he did?

f) Read Acts 5:12-16. How do people respond to those events, and why?

i. In verse 11?

ii. In verse 13?

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY EIGHT: Suffering for Christ

Acts 5:17-42

1/ Getting started

- a) Have you ever had to suffer because you are a follower of Jesus? If so, how did you respond? Why?

2/ Turning to the Bible

- a) Read Acts 5:17-24. What has made the religious leaders jealous?

- b) What is surprising, about the events that follow? (v18-24)

- c) Read Acts 5:25-42. How do the apostles respond to the opposition they experience? (v25)

3/ Getting personal

a) Consider the response of the apostles to opposition. How do you think you might respond, if you faced that sort of opposition today? Discuss.

b) How do you think the apostles were able to rejoice, even in such suffering (v41)? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY NINE: The First Martyr

Acts 6 & 7

1/ Getting started

- a) When have you experienced tensions between Christians? How did you feel? Discuss.

2/ Turning to the Bible

- a) Read Acts 6:1-7. What is the main source of tension between the early believers?

- b) What solution is reached, and why?

- c) Read Acts 6:8-15. What sort of man is Stephen?

- d) What charges are laid against Stephen? Why?
- e) Read Act 7:1-53. Summarise Stephen's response to the charges levelled against him.
- f) Read Acts 7:54-60. What finally happens to Stephen? Why, do you think?

3/ Getting personal

a) In what ways is Stephen a good example for us? Discuss.

b) How might the events of these chapters help us deal with tensions in our own fellowship? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

