

FINAL SUMMARY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

THE STORY OF THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH

1. THE CHURCH AS THE FULFILLMENT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT PROMISES

a. Moses

- i. In Peter's speech "Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren as he raised me up. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. And it shall be that every soul that does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.'" (3:22-23)
- ii. In Stephen's speech (7:27-29)
- iii. In Paul's Speech: "To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: that the Christ must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles." 26:22-23)
- iv. By Paul in Rome: When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in great numbers. And he expounded the matter to them from morning till evening, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets.(28:23)

b. David

- i. Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise of the everlasting Kingdom
 - 2:25-36
 - And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king; of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.' Of this man's posterity God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised. (13:22-23)

c. Prophets

- i. The Church as being the fulfillment of the prophecies, including Joel, of "the Last Days" and of the prophecy of the "pouring out" (2:28-32)
- ii. Isaiah's Messianic Servant (3:3)
- iii. Jesus is the stone that has been rejected of Psalm 118:12 (4:11)
- iv. To him all the prophets bear witness (10:43)
- v. The prophecy of Amos regarding the Gentiles (15:16-18)

2. THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST

a. Saul, Saul... (9:4-5)

- i. Paul's theology of the body of Christ
 - For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, **so we, though many, are one body in Christ**, and individually members one of another. (Rom 12:4-15)
 - For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, **though many, are one body**, so it is with Christ. For by one

Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit... If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together... Now **you are the body of Christ** and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers (1 Cor 12:12-13, 26-28)

- **There is one body** and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, **one faith**, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. (Eph 4:4-6)

b. That its members live out the life of Christ in Them

i. Peter

- Peter works the miracles Jesus did
 - a. The Healing of Aeneas (9:32-35) is parallel with Jesus’ healing of a paralytic (Luke 5:17-26)
 - b. The raising of Tabitha at Joppa (Acts 9:36-43) is parallel with Jesus’ rising of Jairus’ Daughter (Lk 8:41-42; 49-56)

ii. Stephen

STEPHEN IN ACTS	JESUS
And Stephen, full of <u>grace and power</u> , did great wonders and signs among the people. (7:8)	My <u>grace</u> is sufficient for you, for my <u>power</u> is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor 12:9) Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst (Acts 2:22)
But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke (7:10) ***REMEMBER LUKE 21:15*** <i>...for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.</i>	He came to His hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers (Mt 13:54) And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. (Luke 2:47) And they were astonished at his teaching, (Mk 1:22) No one ever spoke the way this man does (Jn 7:46)
Then they secretly instigated men (7:11)	Now the chief priests and the whole council sought false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death (Mt 26:59)
We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God (7:11)	Then the high priest tore his robes, and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy.”

	(Mt 26:65)
And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, (7:12)	Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Ca'iaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. (Mt 26:57)
And set up false witnesses (7:13)	many false witnesses came forward. (Mt 26:60)
who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law; ¹⁴ for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." 7:13-14)	At last two came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.'" (Mt 26:60-61)
Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God (7:56)	Hereafter you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven (Mt 26:64)
Then he fell to his knees and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them (7:60)	Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34)
As they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (7:59)	Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Lk 23:46)

iii. Paul

- Heals
 - a. And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, ¹² so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. (19:12)
- Raises from the dead
 - a. But Paul went down and bent over him, and embracing him said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. And they took the lad away alive, and were not a little comforted. (20:10-12)
- Similarities between trials of Jesus and Paul

3. THE SACRAMENTAL LIFE OF THE CHURCH

a. Baptism

- i. Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent, and **be baptized every one of you** in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For **the promise** is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him." (Acts 2:37-39)
- ii. So those who received his word **were baptized**, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (2:41)

- iii. But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip (8:12-13)
 - iv. And as they went along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What is to prevent my being baptized?" And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, **and he baptized him.** (8:36-38) *The Ethiopian Eunuch*
 - v. Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. (10:47-48) *Cornelius and the gang*
 - vi. And when she was baptized, with her household (16:15) *Lydia*
 - vii. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family. (16:33) *Soldier*
 - viii. And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name. (22:16) *Ananias to Paul*
- b. Confirmation
- i. Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samar'ia had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only **been baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus. **Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.** (8:14-17)
 - ii. On hearing this, they **were baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had **laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them;** and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. (19:5-6)
- c. Eucharist
- i. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to **the breaking of bread** and the prayers. (2:42)
 - ii. And day by day, attending the temple together and **breaking bread** in their homes (2:46)
 - iii. On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to **break bread** (Acts 20:7)
 - iv. And when Paul had gone up and had **broken bread** and eaten, (20:11)
 - v. When he was at table with them, **he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them.** And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight. (24:30-31)
 - vi. Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in **the breaking of the bread.** (Luke 24:35)
 - vii. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? **The bread which we break,** is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. (1 Cor 10:16-17)

viii. For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed **took bread**, and when he had given thanks, **he broke it**, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself. (1 Cor 11:23-29)

d. Holy Orders

i. Election of Matthaïas (1:12-26)

- His office let another take (1:20)

ii. Laying on of Hands

- As a transfer of authority based on Joshua's ordination (Num 27:18-23)
- These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and **laid their hands upon them**. (6:6)
- "While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they **laid their hands on them** and sent them off."(13:2-3)

iii. Examples of ordained men as a given

- And when they had **appointed elders** for them in every church, with prayer and fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they believed. (Acts 14:23)
- And from Mile'tus he sent to Ephesus and called to him **the elders** of the church.(20:17)
- Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you **guardians**, to feed the church of the Lord which he obtained with his own blood. (Acts 20:28)
- On the following day Paul went in with us to James; and **all the elders** were present (21:18)

4. THE DOCTRINAL INDIVISIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

a. Peter's unique role

i. During the first novena in the upper room

- His authoritative interpretation of Scripture and his role as decision maker confirmed.
- In those days Peter stood up among the brethren (the company of persons was in all about a hundred and twenty), and said... (1:15)
- and he was enrolled with the eleven apostles. (1:26)

- ii. His prominence in the first chapters of Acts
 - Peter (2:38; 3:4; 3:6; 3:12; 4:8; 4:19; 5:3; 5:8; 5:9; 5:15)
 - Peter standing with the eleven (2:14)
 - Peter and the rest (2:37)
 - Peter and the apostles (5:29)
 - Peter and John (3:1; 3:3; 3:11; 4:13; 4:19;)
- iii. His role in the conversion of Cornelius
 - His vision and guidance by the Holy Spirit (10:9-16)
 - The Holy Spirit descends as a sign to him (10:44)
 - His authoritative decision that the Gentiles be baptized (10:48)
 - He then instructs the Church on the decision (11:1-18)
- iv. His role at the first Council at Jerusalem
 - And after there had been much debate, Peter rose and said to them... (15:7)
 - And all the assembly kept silence... (15:12)
- v. Luke's staunch and intentional presentation of Peter to Paul's crowd.
 - No one Church member but Peter talks until Chapter 6 where the 12 speak, and then Chapter 7 when Stephen Speaks
 - Peter is shown as doing the works of Christ (9:32-43)
 - It is Peter that is shown as having first received the uncircumcised Gentiles into the Church (Chapter 10)
 - It is Peter that speaks up and confirmed that decision (Chapter 15)
- b. Doctrinal Correction as a sign of orthodoxy
 - i. Disagreement is not allowed, but brought to the Church for resolution
 - And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. (15:2)
 - ii. Apollos is corrected by Priscilla and Aquila
 - He began to speak boldly in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and expounded to him the way of God more accurately. (18:26)