

Subject	Lessons from Our History Book	4401
		Acts 1
Title	7 Lessons from Acts 1	
Proposition	To study some practical and important lessons to be learned from the first chapter of Acts.	
Objective	So that we might benefit from the Spirit-inspired Luke's work at recording the history of the church.	

7 Lessons from Acts 1

Introduction:

1. **The word TRANSITION is a word often used by Bible students when discussing the Book of Acts.**
 - 1) **The Book of Acts is a transitional book between the four accounts of the life of Christ and the remainder of the NT.**
 - 2) **Acts 1 is also a TRANSITIONAL CHAPTER.**
 - 1- **Between Luke's account of the Life of Christ and things that followed that remarkable life.**
 - 2- **Between the promises that the church/kingdom was soon to begin and its ACTUAL beginning.**
 - 3- **Between the PROMISES that the apostles would be baptized in the Holy Spirit and the fulfillment of those promises.**
 - 4- **Between the ANNOUNCEMENT of the terms of pardon through the blood of Christ in the Great Commission and the proclamation of those terms to Jews and Gentiles throughout the world.**
2. **In our study of Acts, we want to emphasize lessons from it that will cause us to be more effective and fruitful in our daily walk.**
3. **We are blessed to have Luke's record.**
4. **It is a powerful message of how God has worked through His people in the past.**
5. **The question is, can we learn from them, and from what happened then, to improve our own fruitfulness in the Lord's vineyard TODAY!**

DISCUSSION: From Acts 1, I LEARN—

I. The VITAL Importance of the Resurrection (1.3, 14).

Acts 1:3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion **by many infallible proofs**, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: + **Acts 1:14** These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with **his brethren**.

1. **Before we notice this lesson, it might be good to point out Luke's use of the word FORTY—BEING SEEN OF THEM FORTY DAYS.**
 - 1) **It is only here that we learn that of the FIFTY days between the crucifixion and the Day of Pentecost, Jesus remained on earth FORTY of them.**

- 2) It is interesting that we see that NUMBER quite often in Scripture.
- 1- God brought rain upon the world of Noah 40 days and 40 nights.
 - 2- Moses was in the mount 40 days and 40 nights before receiving the ten commandments.
 - 3- Jesus fasted in the wilderness 40 days and 40 nights between His baptism and temptations (Matthew 4, Luke 4).
2. There are TWO indicators here regarding HOW VERY IMPORTANT the resurrection was.
- 1) God saw it to be so very important that He provided MANY INFALLIBLE proofs.
 - 1- One of the amazing proofs of the inspiration of Scripture is its ANTICIPATION of error.
 - 1] The Lord KNEW that there would be men who would DENY the resurrection.
 - 2] Luke informs us that it would be impossible reasonably to deny the resurrection.
 - 3] WHY?
 - 4] Because of INFALLIBLE proofs.
 - 5] 28.45 τεκμήριον, ου *n*: that which causes something to be known as verified or confirmed—‘evidence, proof, convincing proof.’¹.
 - 6] We are impressed by Luke’s Holy-Spirit inspired choice of words.
 - 2- If an individual wants to deny infallible proofs, they may do so, but they can’t be REASONABLE and do it!
 - 3- But notice, also, it was not one single infallible proof, but MANY!
 - 4- We need to UNDERSCORE that neither the faith of the apostles, nor the faith in the resurrected Christ that any Christian has ever genuinely entertained—HAS EVER BEEN A HOPE AGAINST HOPE.
 - 1] Biblical faith rests upon PROOF—indeed MANY proofs.
 - 2] John included the miraculous signs in his biography of Christ for the purpose of PRODUCING FAITH (John 20.30-31).
 - 3] Real faith rests upon blessed assurances, convictions, and evidence.
 - 2) These infallible proofs were so powerful that it convinced the brothers of Jesus—Acts 1:14 **These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.**
 - 1- Jesus’ brothers were also present.
 - 2- They are identified in Matthew 13:55 **Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?**
 - 3- During the ministry of Jesus, His brothers did not believe His claims— John 7:5 **For neither did his brethren believe in him.**

¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, [*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*](#) (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 339.

- 4- 1 Corinthians 15.7 tells us that James saw THE RISEN LORD.
- 1] This JAMES was most would say is James, the Lord's brother.
 - 2] If Jesus appeared to his brother James and convinced him so that he became a believer, it is easy to conceive that the same happened to the other brothers.
 - 3] They certainly would not have been gathered here with the apostles were it not for the resurrection, which had been proven to their satisfaction!

3. Christians serve a RISEN LORD!

- 1) There is no memorial burial place to which we go forth in pilgrimage to visit.
- 2) Jesus DEFEATED death by rising from it and spending 40 days appearing to well over 500 brethren (1 Corinthians 15.6).
- 3) Paul argues that Jesus rose from the dead and because of that fact, we must accept the fact that we, too, will some day rise from the dead!
- 4) The question is: WILL WE BE PREPARED TO MEET JESUS ON THAT GREAT JD?

From Acts 1, I LEARN—

II. They/We Have a Commander-in-Chief (1.4).

Acts 1:4 And, being assembled together with them, **commanded** them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

1. President Trump sometimes speaks about being COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, and he is holding that position in our nation.
2. However, for Christians, there is only ONE REAL Commander-in-Chief, and that is Jesus.
3. These apostles wisely obeyed the command Jesus issued them.
4. There are a multitude of people in our day who claim to be following Jesus, but they feel free to pick and choose which commands He gives to obey.
 - 1) This is not possible.
 - 2) This will not work.
 - 3) We must never place ourselves in the position already occupied by the Lord Jesus Christ!
 - 4) Revelation 22:16 **I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.**
 - 1- Just a couple of verses later, we have the Apostle John writing— Revelation 22:18-19 **For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: (19) And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.**

- 2- Adding to and taking from the Word of God is such a common and open practice that we might wonder if people have ripped out of their Bibles that last page.
5. If there is a lesson that you and I need to take particular heed to and make sure that we know that we know it, it is this: **JESUS IS OUR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF!**
- 1) We must never seek to find ways to avoid obeying Him.
 - 2) We must ever yield our wills to His will and recognize that the NT is His guidance to us about how to get to heaven and avoid eternal punishment!
 - 3) It is a most serious lesson to learn!

From Acts 1, I LEARN—

III. BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT was NOT a command, but a PROMISE to the Apostles (1.5).

Acts 1:5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

1. There exists such great confusion about the Holy Spirit in our day.
2. It is commonly held among so-called Christians that EVERYONE is baptized in the Holy Spirit.
3. Let's notice here that Jesus is talking to the APOSTLES.
 - 1) If we are going to study a document like the Bible, we must have some familiarity with grammar!
 - 2) When we are reading a paragraph, and we come to a pronoun (YE), if we want to know who is being addressed, we must find the nearest antecedent matching up with the pronoun!
 - 3) This promise of Jesus of baptism with the Holy Spirit is made to certain ones.
 - 4) The certain ones are identified in verse 5 by the pronoun YE.
 - 5) So, who is the YE referencing?
 - 6) We must search for the nearest antecedent.
 - 7) Our search takes us to verse 2, and we find the word: **APOSTLES**.
 - 8) Those to whom Jesus promised Holy Spirit baptism were that group: THE APOSTLES he had chosen—minus Judas, who hanged himself.

From Acts 1, I LEARN—

IV. The Apostles were told: WHY DO YOU STAND GAZING—in view of the FACT that Jesus is coming AGAIN (1.9-11).

Acts 1:9-11 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. (10) And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; (11) Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

1. We can't really know what these men were thinking as they just stood there gazing.

- 1) It is hard for me to resist thinking that they were contemplating **WHAT DO WE DO NOW?**
- 2) It is somewhat comical if that is the case.
 - 1- Jesus had just spent 3 to 3 ½ years preparing them for this very moment.
 - 2- He had already given to them the Great Commission to go into all of the world and preach the gospel.
 - 3- With the statement from God's messengers: **WHY STAND YE GAZING UP INTO HEAVEN**, there seems to me to be a strong urging to appreciate the business they had been assigned by the Lord.
 - 4- These messengers also gave them more food for thought!
 - 1] Jesus is returning.
 - 2] When He returns, He will return as JUDGE.
 - 3] The world is lost in sin.
 - 4] They have the **ONLY** message that can change that!
 - 5] They should know that and be thankful for the challenge of presenting the good news to a lost world.
2. Now was the time for them to pay heed to what Jesus had previously told them: Luke 24:49 **And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.**
 - 1) Thankfully, they did just exactly that.
 - 2) They waited in Jerusalem, and they only had to wait **TEN DAYS**.
 - 3) On that 10th day, the Day of Pentecost following the DBR of Jesus, the power did come just as Jesus had told them (1.8).
 - 4) They were guided into all truth from that moment forward (John 16.13).
 - 5) They accomplished an amazing feat— Colossians 1:23 ... **the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven**; whereof I Paul am made a minister;
3. The challenge you and I need to accept is answering that question—**WHY DO YOU STAND GAZING?**
 - 1) We have the same charge they had.
 - 2) We have the same good news they had.
 - 3) We have the opportunity to save lost souls.
 - 4) We also know that Jesus will return as Judge.
 - 5) Those who are lost will be eternally punished
 - 6) Is there any excuse for us to avoid our responsibility?

From Acts 1, I LEARN—

V. There is a STRONG CONNECTION between what happened in our HISTORY BOOK and Prophecy from the OT (1.16).

Acts 1:16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

1. The sermon of Acts 2 makes very clear that the prophet Joel prophesied of the very thing that was happening on that Pentecost Day.
2. God is a promise-keeping God.
3. He told His prophets this day was coming—the day did come and Peter pointed out on that occasion that prophecy was BEING FULFILLED.
4. God's Book is amazing, partly because of FULFILLED PROPHECY.
5. We can safely trust the contents of such a book as this.

From Acts 1, I LEARN—

VI. There are ZERO MEN today who have the right to claim APOSTLESHIP (1.21-22).

Acts 1:21-22 *Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, (22) Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.*

1. You can turn on your TV to certain channels today and hear someone lay out the CLAIM to be an apostle.
 - 1) In fact, if you watch A BIBLE ANSWER on WQWQ, and then tarry over into the next program, there is a man claiming to be an apostle.
 - 2) Does such a claim ring true?
2. There are NO apostles living today!
3. How do we know that?
 - 1) No one meets the qualifications!
 - 2) When it came time to replace Judas, there were certain qualifications that had to be met.
 - 3) These were important qualifications.
 - 4) Without meeting them no man could be effective.
 - 5) No man today was with Jesus from His baptism of John.
 - 6) No man today can claim to be a witness with the apostles of Jesus' resurrection!
4. Actually, it is a fact to realize that the foolish claims of men today, they will meet some day in judgment!

From Acts 1, I LEARN—

VII. It was ONLY TWELVE MEN who were baptized in the Holy Spirit (1.26).

Acts 1:26 *And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.*

1. Diane and I, and my mother, once attended a debate between Guy N. Woods and Marvin Hicks in Kennett, MO.
 - 1) Mr. Hicks was very LOUD and boisterous.
 - 2) Brother Woods was calm and deliberate.
 - 3) Mr. Hick claimed that some "church of Christ" preachers teach that the 120 in the upper room were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

- 4) He wanted to know from brother Woods how many he claimed were baptized in the Spirit.
 - 5) Brother woods calmly, but forcefully, went through the same kind of discussion about the antecedent of THEY (2.4), that we noticed in lesson #3 earlier.
2. Of course, the antecedent for THEY in Acts 1.4 has to move back into the previous chapter (1.26), and it is APOSTLES.
- 1) Believe it or not, when Luke wrote Acts, he did not divide it up into chapters and verses like we have it today.
 - 2) With this little touch of GRAMMAR, brother Woods powerfully made his point.
 - 3) It was NOT the 120 who were baptized in the Holy Spirit, nor any other group except the APOSTLES whom Jesus chose-minus Judas who had hanged himself already!

Conclusion:

1. Seven lessons from Acts 1.
2. Why not read through Acts 2 and see if you can find seven more?
3. We are blessed to have a remarkable history book of our family—the FAMILY OF GOD.
4. How foolish of us not to study it and seek to learn from it how to be a better servant of the Lord!