

Leadership, lifestyle and the book of Acts

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Visiting another country



2

Visiting another country



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Visiting another country

Visiting the past
is like
visiting another country

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To err is human, to lead divine

- Let's start at the very beginning...
- "...the things which Jesus *began* to do and teach" 1:1
- "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 1:7-8

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To err is human, to lead divine

- Let's start at the very beginning...
- Pentecost Acts 2
 - sound, wind and fire vv 2-4
 - God pouring out his Spirit vv 17-18; Joel 2:28-32
 - it is the time to call on the Lord and be saved v 21
 - Jesus is now at God's right side and he pours out the Spirit v 33 (via Psalms 16:8-11a; 110:1)
 - response leads to Spirit-enabled community life vv 42-47

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To err is human, to lead divine

- Incorporating the Gentiles: a divine initiative
 - Stephen and the "Hellenists" 6:8-8:1a
 - signs and wonders 6:8
 - persuasive arguments 6:10
 - facing death by the Spirit 7:55a
 - vision of the exalted Jesus 7:59
 - persecution follows 8:1b-4

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To err is human, to lead divine

- Incorporating the Gentiles: a divine initiative
 - Stephen and the "Hellenists" 6:8-8:1a
 - Philip's mission in Samaria 8:4-24
 - hearing words and seeing signs 8:6-7, 13b
 - crowds amazed at Simon → Simon amazed 8:11, 13
 - Spirit comes 8:14-17
 - visible phenomena 8:18-19

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To err is human, to lead divine

- Incorporating the Gentiles: a divine initiative
 - Stephen and the “Hellenists” 6:8–8:1a
 - Philip’s mission in Samaria 8:4-24
 - the Ethiopian eunuch 8:25-40
 - the angel sends Philip 8:26
 - the Spirit prompts Philip 8:29
 - the eunuch is reading Isaiah 8:30, 32-33
 - God snatches Philip away 8:39

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To err is human, to lead divine

- Incorporating the Gentiles: a divine initiative
 - Stephen and the “Hellenists” 6:8–8:1a
 - Philip’s mission in Samaria 8:4-24
 - the Ethiopian eunuch 8:25-40
 - the planting of the church in Syrian Antioch 11:19-26
 - “Hellenists” = Gentiles 11:19-20
 - God’s hand with them 11:21
 - Barnabas sees “the grace of God” 11:23

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To err is human, to lead divine

- Human limitations
 - the reaction of circumcised believers to Cornelius 11:2
 - torah observance and circumcision required? 15:2-3, 5
 - Peter’s speech 15:7-11

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Acts 15:7-11

7 Peter stood up and said to them, “My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers. 8 And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; 9 and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us. 10 Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? 11 On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”

NRSV

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To err is human, to lead divine

- **Human limitations**
 - the reaction of circumcised believers to Cornelius 11:2
 - torah observance and circumcision required? 15:2-3, 5
 - Peter's speech 15:7-11
 - Barnabas and Paul's testimony 15:12
 - James' summary 15:14, 15-18 (Amos 9:11-12), 19

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Leading (in) God's way: the Miletus speech 20:18b-35

- **Faithful fulfilment of leadership responsibility**
 - "all" $\pi\alpha\tilde{\nu}\varsigma$ vv 18, 19, 27, 21, 32, 26, 35, 28
 - **faithful gospel proclamation**
 - nothing omitted vv 20, 27, 31
 - repentance and faith v 21
 - based on God obtaining the church through the blood of his own v 28
 - no division between Jew and Gentile v 21
 - warning about "savage wolves" v 30
 - need to keep watch v 28

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- **Faithful fulfilment of leadership responsibility**
 - "all" $\pi\alpha\tilde{\nu}\varsigma$ vv 18, 19, 27, 21, 32, 26, 35, 28
 - **faithful gospel proclamation**
 - **imitating Paul**
 - keep alert v 31
 - keep watch over themselves vv 28, 18b-19
 - keep watch over the flock vv 28, 20-21, 26-27
 - God's word of grace vv 32, 24
 - "in all this" v 35; cf. Luke 22:14-38

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Leading (in) God's way: the Miletus speech 20:18b-35

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 - "all" $\pi\alpha\tilde{\nu}\varsigma$ vv 18, 19, 27, 21, 32, 26, 35, 28
 - **faithful gospel proclamation**
 - **imitating Paul**
 - elsewhere in Acts
 - Philippi 16:22-33

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Leading (in) God's way: the Miletus speech 20:18b-35

- **Suffering**
 - at the hands of Paul's own people v 19b
 - future as well as past v 23
 - Paul constrained by the Spirit v 22
 - Paul's testimony as a missionary prisoner v 23
 - determination v 24; patience and fortitude v 19
 - the elders will face suffering vv 29-30
 - listen to Paul's call for watchfulness vv 28, 31
 - elsewhere in Acts
 - Jewish authorities 4:1-22; 5:17-40
 - following Stephen's death 8:1b-3
 - Saul of Tarsus 8:3; 9:1-2 → 9:16

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Leading (in) God's way: the Miletus speech 20:18b-35

- **The attitude to wealth and work**
 - Paul is exemplary vv 35, 33
 - contrast Ephesus 19:24-27a, 19
 - contrast motivations vv 25-26; 19:24-25
 - Paul seeks financial independence v 34; cf. 18:3
 - supporting the "weak" v 35; cf. 21:23-24, 26
 - the call to the elders v 35
 - elsewhere in Acts
 - sharing of possessions
 - individuals contributing to others 2:44-45; 4:32-37
 - Dorcas 9:36, 39
 - community to community support 11:27-30

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Leading (in) God's way: the Miletus speech 20:18b-35

- **The death of Jesus**
 - "atonement theology" v 28
 - God acquiring Israel Isa 43:21; Mal 3:17; Ps 74:2
 - "blood" connotes sacrifice cf. Luke 22:19-20
 - elsewhere in Acts
 - "break bread" 2:42, 26; 20:7, 11
 - "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me" Luke 22:19
 - Emmaus: takes, gives thanks, breaks, gives
Luke 24:30, 35

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