
THE BOOK OF ACTS
MISSION *in* ACTS

Expansion of the believing community depends on God's initiative

- *Pentecost Acts 2*
 - God pours out his Spirit 2:4, 16-17 (quoting Joel 2:28)
 - the believers proclaim God's praise in many languages 2:4-11
 - Peter's speech focuses on how God is acting in this event and through Jesus 2:14-36
 - response is invited from those whom 'the Lord our God' calls to himself 2:39
- *The man at the Beautiful Gate Acts 3-4*
 - the first significant healing recorded by Luke, which leads to the first clash with the Jewish authorities
 - the healing is through the power of God by the name of Jesus 3:6, 13
 - the healed man responds by praising God 3:8, 9
 - subsequent events flow from God's action in healing
 - Peter speaks to the crowd 3:11-12
 - Peter and John say they must obey God rather than human authorities 4:19-20
 - when Peter and John return to the believers
 - they pray to God 4:24
 - they ask God for power and boldness 4:29-30
 - and that's what comes 4:31
- *Samaria 8:4-25*
 - Philip's evangelistic effectiveness came from deliverance ministry and healing 8:6-7
 - the Spirit is 'God's gift' 8:20
- *The Ethiopian eunuch 8:26-40*
 - meeting of Philip and the eunuch is by 'divine appointment' vv 26, 29, 30, 32-33
 - after the eunuch's baptism, Philip is taken elsewhere by the Spirit v 39
- *Cornelius 10:1-11:18; 15:7-9*
 - important—Luke tells the story three times over: 10:1-48; 11:4-17; 15:7-9
 - God speaks to Cornelius by an angel very specifically 10:3-6; 31-32; 11:13-14
 - God sends Peter a threefold vision 10:9-16
 - God speaks to Peter to welcome the visitors from Cornelius 10:19-20; 11:12
 - God sends the Spirit on Peter's hearers 10:44-47; 11:15; note 10:47; 11:18

- *Saul's Damascus Road experience* 9:1-19; 22:3-21; 26:2-23
 - told three times by Luke
 - an experience of the intervention of God-in-Jesus 22:14; 26:19, 20, 26
- *Barnabas and Saul leaving Antioch* 13:1-3
 - the Holy Spirit speaking v 2; cf. 21:11; Luke 1:67; Acts 4:25
- *God's call to Macedonia* 16:6-10
 - God calls—one of only four NT passages (cf. 13:3) where verb 'to call' is used for God calling to a specific task or role [others: Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1]
 - Paul and colleagues prevented by God from Asia v 6 or Bithynia v 7
 - night vision of the Macedonian man v 9 interpreted v 10

The believing community lags behind God's initiative

- *esp. over admission of Gentiles as believers without circumcision*
- *Cornelius* 11:2-3; 15:1-2, 5; cf. Galatians
- *Jerusalem meeting* 15:1-29
 - set up to deal with the question 15:5
 - Peter 15:7-11
 - Barnabas and Paul 15:12
 - James 15:13-21

Discuss

Your church is studying Acts to identify key principles for mission, to inform your church's mission. What are the things you will say, and what activities might these lead to for the church?