

January 7, 2025

## Introduction to the Book of Acts

1. Approaches to the Study of Acts: Academic, Historical, or going even further to discover the 'How' and 'Why' of what transpired.
2. Helps and Assistance with study: ESV maps, timelines, charts, study notes on the lives of Peter, Paul and the missionary journeys. (The Ray VanDerLaan video series entitled "That the Word May Know" will bring you on site to Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, etc to see locations cited on Paul's journeys.)
3. Acts is a record of the Rise and Expansion of the Early Christian Church, and that growth reaches its apex with Acts 19-20, followed by a decline which is fueled by persecution, Paul's imprisonment and other factors.
4. Acts 28 ends with Paul under house arrest around 62 AD, but he is later released, continues to minister, is arrested again in Rome and executed under Nero's reign between 65-67 AD.
5. II Timothy 1:15 and 4:6 indicate the status of Paul and the church in Asia Minor at the time of his death.
6. We will utilize the "ABC" method for our study, meaning we will begin with the accounts in **Acts**, go **Back** to the Gospels to see if they were actually living out discipleship, then "**C**" (See) what light the Epistles shed on the why and how of the dynamic nature of the church in Acts.
7. Example of the ABC method: Acts 5:12-16 relays the signs and wonders occurring in the early church in the first few years following Pentecost. Does this reflect what Christ did and taught in the Gospels? Yes. How were they able to live in such a way? Colossians 1:15-19, 26-29 and Colossians 2:2-3, 9-15 provide great insight. They believed they had Christ within via the gift of holy spirit and served as ambassadors for Christ in his physical absence.

Next Week: A closer look at the life of Paul, beginning with Acts 9 and 26.