



The
ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES

The image features a central graphic of a flame in shades of orange and red, positioned to the left of the word 'ACTS'. The word 'The' is written in a white, cursive font above 'ACTS'. Below 'ACTS', the words 'OF THE APOSTLES' are written in a white, serif font. The background is a dark, textured brown with stylized, wavy patterns in a lighter brown color, suggesting flames or smoke.



Today's Scripture Reading

Acts 6:1-7



¹ Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ² And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. ³ Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. ⁴ But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”



⁵ And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶ These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷ And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.



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Acts 6:1-7

Drama in the Early Church



*What is the purpose
of Acts?*

ACTS of the APOSTLES | 6:1-7



THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

MAP 13

Rome



Jerusalem

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8



Things Acts Is NOT About

1. **An Exhaustive History Of The Early Church**
 - e.g. limited info on lives of Apostles
2. **A Template For How To Do Church**
 - e.g. the details and order of details change from one event to another



*How does this passage
fit the purpose of Acts?*



Recap – Acts 1

The Church's Mission & Promise Of The Spirit

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8

Jesus Ascends

Matthias Chosen To Replace Judas



Recap – Acts 2

Coming Of The Holy Spirit & Peter's Sermon

Diverse Crowd Brought Close Together In Worship

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. Acts 2:42-44

Church Grows Dramatically



Recap – Acts 3 & 4

The Lame Beggar Healed & Peter Preaches

Peter and John Taken Before Council & Released

Believers Pray For Boldness

Believers Had Everything In Common

There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. Acts 4:34-35



Recap – Acts 5

Ananias & Sapphira Are Killed By God For Lying

Many Signs & Wonders Done

Apostles Arrested, Freed By God, & Brought To Council

We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching. Acts 5:28

Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus. Acts 5:41-42



Preview – Acts 6-8

Seven Chosen To Serve

Stephen Is Seized, Preaches, & Is Killed (1st Martyr)

Persecution Intensifies & Early Church Scattered

And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Acts 8:1

Philip “The Evangelist” Leads Gospel Spread



Acts 6:1

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.

Who are the Hellenists & Hebrews?

What is the 'daily distribution'?

What is being threatened here?



Acts 6:2-4

And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

What second threat do the apostles perceive?



Acts 6:5-6

And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

Who are these men?

What role do they serve?

How are they installed?



Acts 6:7

And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

Why mention the multiplication of disciples?

Why mention the conversion of the priests?



What's the Point?

Main goal = **SET STAGE** for gospel spread

Other goal = **RECOGNIZE THREATS** from **WITHIN**

- ➔ Threat to **BODY**...
dividing along cultural lines
- ➔ Threat to **MISSION**...
focusing on physical needs > spiritual needs



Dealing with Drama

Hellenists voiced their complaints to Hebrews

➡ speak up if you're hurting (Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1-2)

Hebrews didn't argue validity of complaint

➡ be open to correction (Galatians 2:11-14)

Everybody came together & listened to Apostles

➡ stay engaged in / make decisions with the body
(Hebrews 10:24-25)



Dealing with Drama

Problem interpreted in light of Church's purpose

➡ One body, making disciples of all nations (Ephesians 2, Matthew 28)

Leaders were commissioned from within Hellenists

➡ Encourage different roles/gifts within body (1 Corinthians 12:1-31)

Believers submitted to the Apostles' decision

➡ Celebrate leadership within your local body (Hebrews 13:17)



Obstacles to Unity

Apathy For Our Mission (e.g. Idolatry)

➡ What keeps you from going all in for Christ?

Misunderstanding Our Mission (e.g. Bad Theology)

➡ What part(s) of the gospel do you celebrate? tend to downplay?

Apathy For The Body Of Christ (e.g. Selfishness)

➡ What keeps you from putting others before yourself?



So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

- Philippians 2:1-4



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The image features a central graphic of a stylized flame in a vibrant orange-red hue. The flame is composed of several pointed, overlapping shapes that create a sense of movement and heat. To the right of the flame, the word "ACTS" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Above "ACTS", the word "The" is written in a smaller, elegant, cursive script. Below "ACTS", the words "OF THE APOSTLES" are written in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font. The entire text and graphic are set against a dark, textured background with a mottled olive-green and brown color palette. The background is framed by large, stylized, light-colored wave-like shapes that resemble flames or smoke, creating a dynamic and dramatic effect.