

# The Acts of the Non-Apostles

by Nancy Kuhlman

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## Lesson 1 – The Empowering of God's People

### Read Acts 1:1-11

1. From Acts 1:1-2; Luke 1:1-4; Colossians 4:14; and 2 Timothy 4:9-11, who is identified as the author of the book of Acts and what do we know about him?
2. If Luke's Gospel is about "all that Jesus began to do and teach...", what is happening in Acts?
3. Luke, in essence, wrote a two-volume account of the life and work of Jesus. How does the work of Jesus appear in the book of Acts?
4. Use Acts 1:8 as an "outline" to show the unfolding of the theme of this book. Name some of the "major players" in the drama (Acts 2:14; Acts 9:4).
5. Why were the disciples to remain in Jerusalem? (verse 4)

For what purpose will they receive this power?

What does this tell you about what God wants and His plan for accomplishing it?

6. It is clear that Peter and Paul and the other "famous" people of the Bible were not the only people involved in the amazing spread of the Gospel. Who else is involved?

Why do you think it is important for us to understand this?

### Read Acts 1:12-14

7. What did the disciples do while they were waiting for this "power" that Jesus promised?



**Read Acts 1:15-26**

8. What general principles did the disciples consider in selecting a replacement for Judas?
9. How are these principles followed in *our* church today?
10. Remember the context here—they were *waiting*. Maintaining their numbers and meeting and praying and voting were in preparation for what was to come. For what were they preparing?
11. How does viewing some of the activities of our congregation from the perspective of preparation help you see the connection between these activities and God's purpose for His Church?

What might such a change of perspective on “church work” bring about in a congregation?

**Read Acts 2:1-13**

12. What attracted people to the disciples at Pentecost?
13. How does being filled with the Holy Spirit relate to being a witness for Jesus?

**Read Acts 2:14-21**

14. Martin Luther said the event of Pentecost marked a change. “There will not be some order - as there was in that old people [the Israelites] - of those who alone had the power of priestly function. Instead, the Holy Spirit will be poured out on all flesh. All will be teachers and priests of God.” \*

How do we at *this* church fit into this picture and what does that mean in terms of our place in God's plan?

**Read Acts 2:42-47.**

15. What reliance do you see developing in the early church?
16. What picture do you get of the role of prayer in the church? (see also Acts 1:14; 4:31; 12:5)



17. Describe the role and meaning of “fellowship” in the early church. Explore what such a fellowship would look like in our congregation today.

18. What words from vv 43-47 describe the sense of unity in Christ the early church experienced?

What can we do right now to regain that acute awareness?

19. What did the apostles *teach*? (quickly review Peter’s sermon in vv. 14-40)

How do we also devote ourselves to the apostles’ teaching today?

20. What did Jesus say about the practice of breaking bread together? (see Matthew 26:26-28)

21. How did outsiders respond to the church (v. 47)?

Do others today respond the same way to *our* “Christian community”? Explain and explore.

\*quoted on page 27 in *Acts* by Richard D. Balge, from the *People’s Bible Commentary* series, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 2005.

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