

# The Church Christ Built

*The Acts of the Apostles — From Jerusalem to the  
Ends of the Earth*

*c. AD 31 - c. AD 62*

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*Primary Source: Holy Scripture · [noblemind.study/the-church-christ-built/](https://noblemind.study/the-church-christ-built/)*

*The book of Acts in order — the gospel moving outward from Jerusalem to Rome in the three rings  
of Acts 1:8. Where a New Testament letter was written along the way, the online timeline marks  
it; consult it online for those cross-references.*

c. AD 31

## The ascension & the promise of the Spirit

 Acts 1:1-11

Luke opens his second book where his Gospel closed. Over forty days the risen Jesus teaches the apostles and gives them the promise — *you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth*. Then He is lifted up, and a cloud receives Him out of their sight.

*Acts 1:8 is the outline of the whole book — and of this timeline. The gospel moves outward in three rings: Jerusalem, then Judea & Samaria, then the ends of the earth. Use the filter to follow one ring at a time.*

c. AD 31

## Waiting in prayer; Matthias chosen

 Acts 1:12-26

The eleven, with the women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brothers — about a hundred and twenty — devote themselves to prayer in the upper room. Peter leads them to choose one to take the place of Judas among the Twelve; the lot falls to Matthias.

*Peter names the qualifications for an apostle: one who had accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us — beginning with the baptism of John until... He was taken up, and was a witness of His resurrection (Acts 1:21-22). No one born after that generation could meet the first of them — they had not walked with Jesus from the beginning. The apostleship was not an office that could simply be handed on.*

Pentecost, c. AD 31

## Pentecost — the Spirit poured out

 Acts 2:1-13

On the day of Pentecost a sound like a rushing wind fills the house, tongues as of fire rest on each of them, and they speak in other languages as the Spirit gives them. Jews from every nation under heaven hear the mighty works of God each in his own tongue. The church is born.

*Fifty days after the resurrection — the doorway from the Gospels into Acts. And the other tongues were real human languages: the crowd from many nations were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language (Acts 2:6, 8, 11) — understood speech, not unintelligible utterance.*

→ Back to where this begins → The Life of Christ

*Pentecost, c. AD 31*

### **Peter's sermon — three thousand baptized**

 *Acts 2:14-41*

Peter stands and preaches the first gospel sermon: Joel's prophecy fulfilled, Jesus crucified and raised, exalted at God's right hand — *God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified.* Cut to the heart, the crowd asks what to do. *Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* About three thousand are added that day.

*c. AD 31*

### **The life of the first church**

 *Acts 2:42-47*

They devote themselves to the apostles' teaching, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers. They hold all things in common, praise God, and have favor with all the people — *and the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

## **II. The Church in Jerusalem**

*Acts 3-7 · c. AD 31-35*

*c. AD 31*

### **The lame man healed; Peter's second sermon**

 *Acts 3:1-4:4*

At the temple's Beautiful Gate Peter heals a man lame from birth — *in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene... walk!* The amazed crowd gathers, and Peter preaches the Author of life whom they killed and God raised: *repent therefore and return, so that your sins may be wiped away.* Many believe, and the number of the men comes to about five thousand.

*c. AD 31*


### **Peter and John before the Sanhedrin**

 *Acts 4:1-31*

Arrested by the priests, Peter and John stand before the rulers: *there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven... by which we must be saved.* The council, unable to deny the healing, forbids them to speak in Jesus' name — but they answer, *we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.*

c. AD 32

### All things in common; Ananias and Sapphira

 Acts 4:32-5:11

The believers are of one heart and soul, sharing everything; Barnabas sells a field and lays the money at the apostles' feet. But Ananias and Sapphira lie about their gift — *you have not lied to men but to God* — and each falls dead. Great fear comes upon the whole church.

c. AD 32

### The apostles arrested; Gamaliel's counsel

 Acts 5:12-42

Signs and wonders multiply; the apostles are jailed, freed by an angel, and hauled again before the council. *We must obey God rather than men.* The Pharisee Gamaliel urges restraint — *if this plan is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them.* They are flogged and released, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the Name.

c. AD 33

### The seven chosen to serve

 Acts 6:1-7

As the disciples multiply, a complaint arises that the Hellenistic widows are overlooked in the daily distribution. The Twelve have the church choose seven men full of the Spirit and wisdom — Stephen among them — so the apostles can devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. The word of God keeps spreading, and a great many priests become obedient to the faith.

c. AD 34

### Stephen — the first to die for the Name

 Acts 6:8-7:60

Stephen, full of grace and power, is seized on false charges. Before the council he traces Israel's whole story and turns it on them: *you men who are stiff-necked... you are always resisting the Holy Spirit.* Enraged, they stone him; he sees heaven opened and prays, *Lord, do not hold this sin against them.*

*A young man named Saul stands by, watching the coats of the witnesses and approving the killing — the man who will carry the gospel to the nations.*

c. AD 34

### The persecution scatters the church

 Acts 8:1-4

On the day of Stephen's death a great persecution breaks out, and all but the apostles are scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria. Saul ravages the church, dragging off men and women to prison. But those who are scattered go about *preaching the word* — and the second ring of Acts 1:8 begins.

c. AD 34

### Philip in Samaria; Simon the magician

 Acts 8:5-25

Philip proclaims Christ in a city of Samaria; crowds believe and are baptized, and there is great joy. But the Spirit's gifts come only when the apostles arrive: Peter and John lay their hands on the Samaritans, *and they were receiving the Holy Spirit*. Simon, who had amazed them with magic, then offers money for that power — *your heart is not right before God... repent of this wickedness*.

*Here Scripture shows how the miraculous gifts were given: the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 8:18). Philip — one of the seven, not an apostle — could preach, baptize, and work signs, yet the Samaritans received the gifts only when the apostles came (later, Paul does the same at Ephesus, Acts 19:6). Set beside the unrepeatable qualifications of an apostle (Acts 1:21-22), it follows that the gifts would pass away as that generation died — the cessation Paul foretold: if there are tongues, they will cease... when the perfect comes (1 Cor 13:8, 10).*

c. AD 34

### Philip and the Ethiopian

 Acts 8:26-40

An angel sends Philip to a desert road, where an Ethiopian court official rides reading Isaiah — *as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He does not open His mouth. Do you understand what you are reading?* Beginning from that very Scripture, Philip preaches Jesus; at water the eunuch asks, *what prevents me from being baptized?* — and goes on his way rejoicing, carrying the gospel toward Africa.

*Notice what the eunuch's question reveals: Philip preached Jesus to him (v. 35), and the moment they reach water the eunuch asks to be baptized (v. 36). To preach Jesus, then, included teaching baptism — he could not have known to ask for it otherwise.*

c. AD 35

### The conversion of Saul on the Damascus road

 Acts 9:1-19

Still breathing threats, Saul heads for Damascus with warrants against the disciples. A light from heaven flashes; he falls, and a voice: *Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?... I am Jesus whom you are persecuting*. Blinded, he is led into the city; Ananias, sent trembling, lays hands on him — *he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles*. Saul rises, is baptized, and regains his sight.

→ *The life that follows* → the Apostle Paul timeline

c. AD 35

### Saul begins to preach; escapes Damascus


 Acts 9:20-31

At once Saul proclaims in the synagogues, *He is the Son of God*. The amazed and the enraged plot to kill him; the disciples lower him over the city wall in a basket. Brought to Jerusalem by Barnabas, he is met with fear until he is sent off to Tarsus. And the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria has peace and is built up.

→ *Paul's early years* → the Apostle Paul timeline

c. AD 36

### Peter: Aeneas healed, Dorcas raised

 Acts 9:32-43


Peter, traveling about, heals the paralyzed Aeneas at Lydda and raises Dorcas (Tabitha) at Joppa — *Tabitha, arise*. Many believe; and Peter stays on in Joppa — poised, though he does not yet know it, for the door that is about to open to the Gentiles.

## IV. The Door Opens to the Gentiles

Acts 10-12 · c. AD 37-44

c. AD 37

### Peter's vision and the call to Cornelius

 Acts 10:1-33

Cornelius, a devout Roman centurion in Caesarea, is told by an angel to send for Peter. Meanwhile Peter, on a rooftop in Joppa, sees a sheet let down from heaven full of unclean animals and hears a voice: *what God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy*. Three times — and as he wonders at it, Cornelius's men arrive. Peter goes with them, against every custom: *God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean*.

c. AD 37

### **The Spirit falls on the Gentiles; the household baptized**

 Acts 10:34–48


Peter preaches Christ to the Gentiles gathered at Cornelius's house — *God is not one to show partiality*. While he is still speaking, the Holy Spirit falls on all who are listening, and they speak with tongues and exalt God. Peter then orders them baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ. The door to the nations stands open.

*The Spirit fell on these Gentiles as a sign: the amazed circumcised believers were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God (Acts 10:45–46) — again, known languages — convincing Peter and the Jews with him that God had opened the door to the nations. Peter points straight back to the beginning: the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning (Acts 11:15).*

*Yet even after the Spirit fell, Peter still ordered them to be baptized in water — surely no one can refuse the water... can he? (Acts 10:47–48). Jesus had commanded that new disciples be baptized (Matt 28:19), and the only baptism a man can administer is baptism in water. So the one baptism that remains for the church (Eph 4:5) is water baptism: the Spirit's falling on Cornelius did not replace it, but confirmed that these Gentiles too must be baptized.*

c. AD 37


### **Peter answers the circumcised believers**

 Acts 11:1–18

Criticized in Jerusalem for eating with Gentiles, Peter recounts the whole matter step by step — *the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning... who was I that I could stand in God's way?* The objectors fall silent and glorify God: *God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.*

c. AD 42

### **The church at Antioch; first called Christians**

 Acts 11:19–30

Those scattered by the persecution preach to Greeks at Antioch, and a great number believe. Barnabas, sent to see, fetches Saul from Tarsus, and for a whole year they teach the church there — *and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch*. When a famine is foretold, the Antioch disciples send relief to the brethren in Judea.

AD 44

### **Herod's persecution; James killed, Peter delivered**


 Acts 12:1–25

Herod the king kills James the brother of John with the sword, and seizes Peter, meaning to do the same after the Passover. But the church prays earnestly, and an angel leads Peter out of prison past the sleeping guards and the iron gate that opens by itself. Soon after, Herod, hailed as a god and giving God no glory, is struck down and dies. *But the word of the Lord continued to grow and to be multiplied.*

*Herod Agrippa I's death in AD 44 is one of the firm external anchors that date the events of Acts.*

c. AD 47


### Barnabas and Saul sent from Antioch

 Acts 13:1-3

As the prophets and teachers at Antioch worship and fast, the Holy Spirit speaks: *set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.* They lay hands on them and send them off. The first missionary journey begins — the gospel pressing out toward the nations.

c. AD 47

### Cyprus — Sergius Paulus; Elymas struck blind


 Acts 13:4-12

They preach across Cyprus to Paphos, where the proconsul Sergius Paulus seeks the word. The magician Elymas opposes them; Saul — *who was also known as Paul* — filled with the Spirit, strikes him blind for a time, and the proconsul believes, amazed at the teaching of the Lord.

*From this point Luke calls him Paul, and Paul — not Barnabas — takes the lead.*

c. AD 47


### Pisidian Antioch — the synagogue sermon; turning to the Gentiles

 Acts 13:13-52

In the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch Paul preaches Jesus, the promised Son of David, raised from the dead: *through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and... everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.* When the Jews oppose him, he turns to the Gentiles, who rejoice — *I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, that You may bring salvation to the end of the earth.*

c. AD 48


### Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe

 Acts 14:1-20

At Iconium many believe, until a plot drives them out. At Lystra Paul heals a man lame from birth, and the crowd tries to sacrifice to him and Barnabas as gods — *we are also men, of the same nature as you.* Then, turned by their enemies, the same crowd stones Paul and drags him out of the city for dead; but he rises and goes on to Derbe.

c. AD 48


### Strengthening the churches; the report at Antioch

 Acts 14:21-28

Retracing their steps, they strengthen the disciples and appoint elders in every church — *through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God*. Back at Antioch they gather the church and report *all that God had done with them, and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles*.

c. AD 49

### The Jerusalem Council

 Acts 15:1-35

When some insist the Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses, the church sends Paul and Barnabas up to Jerusalem. Peter rises: God *made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith* — why put God to the test with a yoke none could bear? *We believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are*. James gives the judgment, and a letter goes to the Gentile churches laying on them no greater burden than a few necessary things. The gospel of grace stands free.


*The Council (c. AD 49) is a central anchor of Acts' chronology, and the turning point of the book: the gospel is for the nations on the same terms as for the Jews — by grace through faith in Christ, not by the Law of Moses.*

## VI. To Macedonia and Greece — the Second Journey

Acts 15:36-18:22 · c. AD 50-52

c. AD 50


### A new start; Silas and Timothy

 Acts 15:36-16:5

Paul and Barnabas part ways over John Mark — Barnabas takes Mark to Cyprus, Paul takes Silas and revisits the churches of the first journey. At Lystra young Timothy, well spoken of by the brethren, joins them. So the churches are strengthened in the faith and grow in number daily.

c. AD 50

### The Macedonian call — the gospel crosses into Europe


 Acts 16:6-10

Forbidden by the Spirit to speak in Asia, and kept from Bithynia, Paul comes to Troas, where a vision appears in the night: *a man of Macedonia... appealing to him, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.'* At once they set sail — and the gospel crosses into Europe.

*Here Luke's narrative shifts to 'we' (16:10) — the writer himself has joined the company.*

c. AD 50


### Philippi — Lydia and the jailer

 Acts 16:11–40

At Philippi, Lydia the seller of purple believes and is baptized with her household. When Paul casts a spirit from a slave girl, her owners have him and Silas beaten and jailed. At midnight, as they sing hymns, an earthquake throws open the prison; the trembling jailer cries, *what must I do to be saved?* — *believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household* — and that very hour he is baptized, he and all his.

c. AD 50

### Thessalonica and Berea


 Acts 17:1–15

In Thessalonica Paul reasons from the Scriptures that the Christ had to suffer and rise; some believe, but a mob drags Jason and others before the authorities — *these men who have upset the world have come here also*. At Berea the Jews are *more noble-minded*, receiving the word eagerly and *examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so*.

*It is the Bereans — more noble-minded... examining the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11) — who give this whole study its name and its method: receive the word eagerly, but test everything against the text itself.*

c. AD 51

### Athens — the sermon at the Areopagus

 Acts 17:16–34

His spirit provoked by a city full of idols, Paul stands before the Areopagus and reasons from their own altar *to an unknown god*: the God who made the world does not live in temples made by hands — *in Him we live and move and exist*. He calls all men everywhere to repent, in view of the coming judgment by the Man God raised from the dead. Some sneer at the resurrection; some believe.

c. AD 51–52

### Corinth — eighteen months; back to Antioch


 Acts 18:1–22

At Corinth Paul stays with Aquila and Priscilla, working as a tentmaker, and reasons in the synagogue every Sabbath. The Lord encourages him in a vision — *do not be afraid... for I am with you... I have many people in this city* — and he stays a year and a half. When the Jews bring him before the proconsul Gallio, the charge is thrown out of court. At last he sails for home, by way of Ephesus, back to Antioch.

*Gallio's proconsulship at Corinth — fixed by an inscription at Delphi to about AD 51–52 — is the single firmest date in all of Acts, the anchor on which the rest of Paul's chronology hangs.*

c. AD 53


### The third journey begins; Apollos

 Acts 18:23–28

Paul sets out again, strengthening the disciples through Galatia and Phrygia. At Ephesus, Apollos — eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures, but knowing only the baptism of John — is taken aside by Priscilla and Aquila and taught *the way of God more accurately*.

c. AD 53–56

### Ephesus — two years in the hall of Tyrannus


 Acts 19:1–22

Paul finds disciples who had received only John's baptism; on hearing of Jesus, *they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*, and when Paul laid his hands on them, the Spirit came and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. For two years he reasons daily in the hall of Tyrannus, until all Asia hears the word; God works *extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul*, and the magicians burn their books.

*Two earlier threads return here. These disciples, baptized only into John's baptism, are baptized again — into Christ (Acts 19:5); John's baptism was not the church's baptism. And again the miraculous gifts come through an apostle's hands — Paul's (Acts 19:6) — as they had through Peter's and John's at Samaria.*

c. AD 56

### The riot of the silversmiths

 Acts 19:23–41

Demetrius, a silversmith who profits from shrines of Artemis, stirs the craftsmen: the gospel is emptying the temples. The city fills with confusion, crying for some two hours, *great is Artemis of the Ephesians!* — until the town clerk quiets the mob and dismisses the assembly.

c. AD 56–57

### Through Macedonia and Greece

 Acts 20:1–6

Paul travels through Macedonia, encouraging the churches with much exhortation, and spends three months in Greece. A plot by the Jews turns him back through Macedonia, and a company of companions goes ahead with him toward Jerusalem.

c. AD 57

### **Troas — the first day of the week; Eutychus raised**

 Acts 20:7-12

On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul preaches until midnight. A young man named Eutychus, asleep in a window, falls three stories to his death; Paul takes him up alive, and they break bread and talk until dawn.

*Acts 20:7 is the clearest glimpse in Acts of the disciples gathering on the first day of the week to break bread.*

c. AD 57

### **The farewell to the Ephesian elders at Miletus**

 Acts 20:13-38


Hurrying toward Jerusalem, Paul calls the Ephesian elders to Miletus and charges them: *be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock... to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood*. He warns of wolves to come, commends them to God, and reminds them — *it is more blessed to give than to receive*. They weep, and embrace him, and see his face no more.

## **VIII. Arrest, Trials & the Road to Rome**

Acts 21-28 · c. AD 57-62

c. AD 57


### **To Jerusalem; arrested in the temple**

 Acts 21:17-36

Welcomed in Jerusalem, Paul takes a vow to show he has not abandoned the law of Moses. But Jews from Asia seize him in the temple, charging that he brought Greeks in; the whole city is roused, and they drag him out to kill him — until Roman soldiers rescue him from the crowd.

c. AD 57

### **Paul's defense; the council; the plot**

 Acts 21:37-23:35

On the barracks steps Paul tells the crowd his own story — the Damascus road, his commission to the Gentiles — until they roar for his death. Before the Sanhedrin he cries, *I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead*. That night the Lord stands by him: *as you have solemnly witnessed at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also*. A plot to kill him is uncovered, and he is sent under heavy guard to Caesarea.

c. AD 57–59


### Before Felix and Festus; the appeal to Caesar

 Acts 24:1–25:12

Before the governor Felix, Paul reasons of *righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come*, until Felix is frightened — yet he leaves Paul bound two years, hoping for a bribe. When Festus succeeds and would send him back to Jerusalem, Paul, a Roman citizen, speaks the words that will carry him to the capital: *I appeal to Caesar*.

c. AD 59

### Before King Agrippa

 Acts 25:13–26:32

Festus lays the case before King Agrippa, and Paul makes his defense — his life, his conversion, the risen Christ, a light to Jews and Gentiles alike. *In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian*, says Agrippa. *I would wish to God*, Paul answers, *that... all who hear me this day might become such as I am, except for these chains*. He has done nothing worthy of death — but he has appealed to Caesar.

*Three times in these chapters the charges against Paul are heard and found empty (by Lysias, Festus, and Agrippa) — Luke's quiet record that the faith was no crime against Rome.*

c. AD 59–60

### The voyage and the shipwreck

 Acts 27:1–44

Sailing for Italy, the ship is caught in a fierce northeaster for many days, all hope of being saved at last abandoned. An angel stands by Paul: *do not be afraid... you must stand before Caesar; and God has granted you all those who are sailing with you*. The ship runs aground and breaks apart off Malta, but every one of the two hundred seventy-six aboard reaches land alive, exactly as he had said.

c. AD 60–62

### Malta, and Rome at last

 Acts 28:1–31

On Malta a viper fastens on Paul's hand and he shakes it into the fire unharmed; he heals the sick of the island. At last he comes to Rome, and there, though under guard, he spends two years *preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered*. The gospel has reached the heart of the empire.

*Acts ends here, mid-story, on the word unhindered — the gospel free in the capital of the world, Acts 1:8 carried to the ends of the earth. Luke records no verdict; later letters (1–2 Timothy, Titus) and early testimony tell of further travels and, at last, Paul's death under Nero. But the book has made its point: nothing has been able to stop the word.*

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