



ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

How God Turned a Band of Nobodies into a Movement for Everybody

How did a handful of ordinary people become ten thousand followers of Jesus in the year following his public execution? How did his movement gain so much momentum, especially as ten of the eleven charter members were crucified, burned, or stoned to death? How did ten thousand Christians become one million by the second century, and 3.3 billion today?

Written in the middle of the first century, The Acts of the Apostles tells the story of how Christianity spread like wildfire across the Roman Empire and beyond. For 25 weeks we will journey through Acts in pursuit of the truth behind history's most consequential movement.

Begin with reflections from [Justin Brierley's sermon on Sunday, September 24th.](#) If everyone watched the sermon you can spend your entire time sharing thoughts from Sunday.

What surprised or encouraged you from Justin's sermon on the state of the Church and the surprising rebirth of faith among atheists in the last decade?

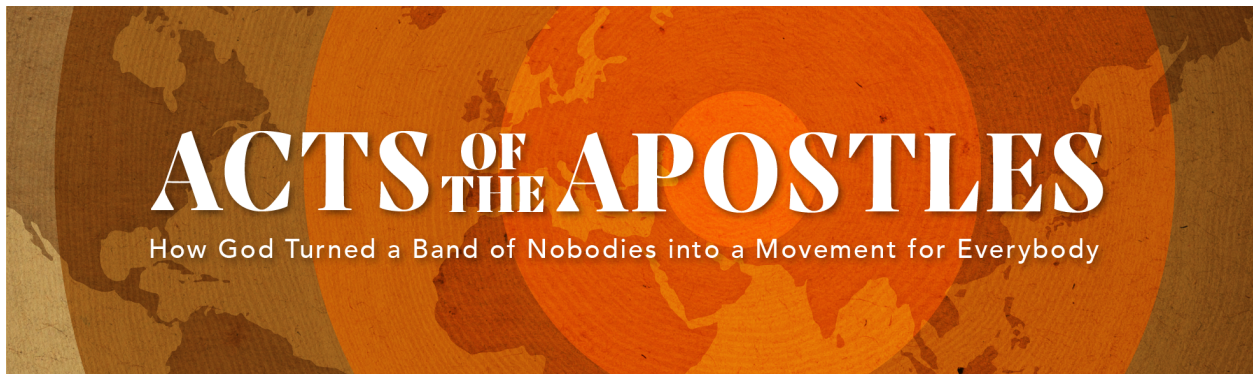
Personal Sermon reflections

Why are stories so important? What narratives control your view of the world and yourself?

The stories we tell ourselves define us. We all are worshippers of something and if it's not God it's an idol of some sort. If our stories revolve around politics, business, family, then that will be the lens through which we see everything. The only story that is compelling enough to hold us all together and provide eternal meaning is the Story of Jesus Christ. This very true story gives us hope, meaning, and purpose.

How can we do a better job of sharing the Story of Jesus with our friends, family, and coworkers in a way that draws them into faith?

Similar to Eric's point last week - Christians should be joyful and the Church should be fun! We aren't trying to get people to be part of a dead religion, but introduce them to Jesus Christ. How do you share your faith when asked? Is it just a boring checklist or ritual, or is it an attractive lifestyle that draws others in?



Justin ended with this quote from G.K Chesterson “Christendom has had a series of revolutions and in each one of them Christianity has died. Christianity has died many times and risen again; for it had a God who knew the way out of the grave.” How do you interpret this quote, and how do you see the Church rising again to meet the needs of our day?

Personal reflections

Discussion Guide: Week 3

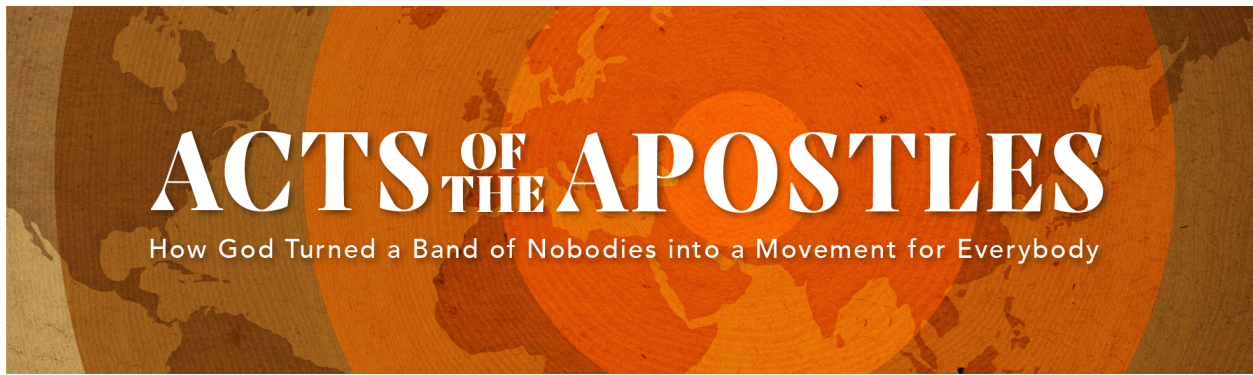
Acts 2:14-24

Last week we talked about the Power of the Holy Spirit and waiting for His presence among us. A week after this conversation has anything changed in your faith? Have you found yourself more aware or focused on the Holy Spirit?

This is a really great opportunity to circle back to some of the conversations we had last week. Hopefully your members can share on how last week's discussion inspired them to seek out the Holy Spirit and spend time in waiting and prayer.

In his sermon in Jerusalem Peter quotes from Joel 2:28-32, a passage that foretells the pouring out of the Holy Spirit among all believers. What parts of this prophecy stand out to you?

- In the last days God will pour His Spirit into all believers (all ages and genders)
- Signs of this are prophecy, visions, and dreams
- This Spirit isn't just poured out on kings and priests, but even slaves
- Apocalyptic tone - darkness, fire, smoke, moon to blood
- Verse 21 foreshadows the new reality where all who call on Jesus are saved!



Last week we focused on speaking in tongues, but this week the passage mentions prophecy, dreams, and visions. How have you experienced these types of spiritual gifts?

People will once again have all different kinds of experiences when it comes to these gifts. Give people a chance to share, but don't let 1-2 people dominate the conversation. Dreams might be the most interesting. When you look across the Bible God uses dreams very frequently to speak to his followers and even enemies. We also hear stories of God speaking in dreams today!

- Examples
 - Joseph. Genesis 37:5-9.
 - Pharaoh. Genesis 41:1-7.
 - Midianite Soldier Judges 7:13-15.
 - Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel 2:1,31; 4:5-8.
 - Daniel. Daniel 7:1-28.

We have been in Acts for three weeks now, what theme or ideas have been most impactful to you so far? What has been most challenging or convincing so far?

Personal reflection