

BORN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

ESSENTIAL CHURCH: ACTS, PART 1 · ACTS 1:1-2:41

SEPTEMBER 7, 2025 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Introducing Acts

- What is Acts?
- Who wrote it and why?
- What does "Acts" mean?
- Why would we study it today?

A New Chapter in the Rule and Reign of God

- The resurrection of Jesus
- The ascension of Jesus
- The waiting of the church in prayer
- The outpouring of the Holy Spirit

Peter's Message About What's Happening

- God's rule and reign in a renewed covenant
- God's rule and reign in Jesus crucified, resurrected, and ascended
- God's rule and reign that leads to radical change and total allegiance

The Holy Spirit in the People of God Now

- Responding to God through total allegiance
- Waiting daily upon God for Him to work
- Living in the rule and reign of God daily
- Watching what God does in the coming weeks

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you felt totally in awe—maybe a scene of nature, a personal experience, or something else? How did you respond?
2. This week we begin a new sermon series, "Essential Church," which is the first in a three-part exploration of the book of Acts. We introduce the series by looking at the

church's beginnings in Acts 1:1-2:41. Begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you, and then read that passage aloud.

3. Background: Acts is a rollicking journey through the story of the early Christians after Jesus' resurrection and ascension. Tracing the expansion of the Jesus movement from Jerusalem, Luke writes selectively, only telling the essential parts of the story.
4. When reading Acts 1:1-11, what captures your imagination about this time between Jesus' resurrection and ascension?
5. Acts 1:8 is a key verse for the entire book. How would you summarize it in your own words?
6. Acts 1:12-26 describes the Jesus movement as a people at prayer. What do you think it would have felt like to be part of that early community?
7. The Holy Spirit comes in power upon the early Christians during the Jewish festival of Pentecost, which celebrated God giving the Law to Moses and Israel. What happens in Acts 2:1-13 and why is it significant?
8. What would you say are the most important points of Peter's message in 2:14-36?
9. Peter's hearers have a dramatic response in 2:37-41. What do they feel and what do they do?
10. What is one thing God speaking to you personally through this week's study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and then pray about it. If you are on your own, write it down, pray about it, and consider sharing your thoughts with someone this week.

DIG DEEPER:

Exploring Faith

- What do you think it means to live surrendered to the Holy Spirit? How might that be different than the way you live right now?

Growing in Faith

- Commit to memory Acts 1:8 or Acts 2:1-4. Reflect on these verses this week.
- Read through Acts 1 and 2 and write down every mention of the Holy Spirit. What do you learn about who the Holy Spirit is and what the Holy Spirit does? What questions do you have? Who might you reach out to this week about that?

Centered in Faith

- As God speaks to you, who might you pour into this week about living surrendered to the Holy Spirit?
- Consider exploring a further resource, such as N. T. Wright, *The Challenge of Acts*