



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Acts—The Most Important Book in the New Testament

MAY 8-10, 2013

David Andersen / PO Box 2020, Chesterfield, VA 23832 / David.Andersen@capitolcom.org

Luke 1:1-4

“Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, 2) just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word have handed them down to us, 3) it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; 4) so that you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.”
(NASB)

“IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF SUCH DIVERSITY, THE ROMAN EMPIRE WAS UNCOMPROMISING IN ITS COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN UNITY. THIS WAS DONE BY REQUIRING ALL CITIZENS TO SACRIFICE TO THE GODS (WHICH INCLUDED THE EMPEROR) REGARDLESS OF THEIR OTHER RELIGIOUS BELIEFS. ALL RELIGIONS WERE TOLERATED AS LONG AS THEY TOLERATED ALL OTHER RELIGIONS, INCLUDING THE EMPEROR CULT. TOLERANCE WAS THE GREAT CIVIL IMPERATIVE, BUT CHRISTIANS KNEW THAT IT WAS A SPIRITUAL IMPOSSIBILITY BECAUSE OF THE UNIQUE CLAIMS OF THE LORD JESUS. THE WAY THE APOSTLES CONFRONTED THE CULTURE PROVIDES A MODEL FOR THE CHURCH TODAY.” DAVID COOK

Was there another New Testament book written that Acts is the second in the series? What was the primary purpose for the writing of Acts? Why is the series of two books written to a Roman Governor? When and from where was Acts written? Who are the primary leaders fulfilling the purpose of the commissions of Christ in Acts? Is there a common thread of leadership in this book? What example is Paul to Theophilus?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- MAY 15-17: ACTS 1:1-11 ACTS: THE CAPITOL COMMISSION

- MAY 22-24: DC CONFERENCE SERVING TOGETHER IN OUR NATION'S CAPITOL – NO BIBLE STUDIES

There are distinct leadership parallels between Jonah and Jesus that are also revealed in the life of Peter and Paul in the book of Acts: 1) They were all sent by God, 2) They all had a strategic mandate to witness in the capitol, 3) Through their witness in the capitol, all the nations would be influenced. For Jonah the capitol was Nineveh, which influenced the nations as the capitol of the world empire. For Jesus the capitol was Jerusalem, the religious capitol of the world from which the nations would be reached even to the capitol of the world empire in Rome through the witness of Peter and Paul. The history of how the Gospel of Jesus Christ proceeded ever outward and upward to the imperial capitol in Rome is the theme and purpose of the inspired writer, Luke, as he penned the strategic work of the early Church. This strategic mandate would be emphasized through the commissions of Christ, the ten occasions of supernatural direction by Christ and the strategic model for winning the nations directed by Christ throughout the historical facts of Acts.

“IN ONE SENSE IT IS TRUE TO SAY THAT THE BOOK OF ACTS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT BOOK IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.”
WILLIAM BARCLAY

I. CHRIST'S STRATEGIC COMMISSIONS ACTS 1:8, 9:15

Acts is the second book written as a sequel by a leader to a leader. Luke, by both the inspired Scriptures and the unanimous agreement of the commentators, is a well educated, “beloved physician” (Col. 4:4). As a respected medical doctor, he writes to “most excellent Theophilus” (Lk. 1:3), with a title of honor comparable to our “His Excellency,” reserved for addressing governors and only used elsewhere in the New Testament for Governors

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – FREDERICKSBURG – BOB EVANS ON RT. 3, 11:30AM – WOODBRIDGE – BOB EVANS, 13900 NOBLEWOOD PLAZA

THURSDAY @ 7:30AM –BIBLE STUDY – CHESTER – SHONEY’S AT RT. 10 (IRON BRIDGE ROAD) & 301(12531 JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY)

FRIDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – NORFOLK – GOLDEN CORRAL, 6103 N. MILITARY HWY, NEAR THE NORFOLK AIRPORT

Virginia

Acts—The Most Important Book in the New Testament

Felix (Acts 23:26, 24:3) and Festus (Acts 26:25). So Luke is giving Governor Theophilus a carefully investigated two part chronological history from eyewitness accounts that he might know precisely the “*exact truth*” concerning Christ (in the Gospel of Luke) and the fulfilling of His commissions (in the Acts of the Apostles). Just as every detail of Christ’s life was in fulfillment of the Old Testament (Mt. 5:17-18), so His commissions are in fulfillment of prophecy (Isaiah 2:2-3, Joel 2:28-32). In regard to those prophecies, Luke ties his histories together with the final words of Christ commissioning His disciples with a four-fold emphasis on their Capitol, Jerusalem! (Luke 24:44-49, Acts 1:4, 8) And that is precisely what they do (Luke 24:52, Acts 1:12). The next commission of Christ requires witnessing to kings (9:15).

“AND HE SAID TO THEM, ‘THUS IT IS WRITTEN, THAT THE CHRIST SHOULD SUFFER AND RISE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD THE THIRD DAY; AND THAT REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS SHOULD BE PROCLAIMED IN HIS NAME TO ALL THE NATIONS, BEGINNING FROM JERUSALEM.’” LUKE 24:46-47

II. CHRIST’S TEN SUPERNATURAL DIRECTIVES

Even before the ten occasions of supernatural direction, Stephen is given a supernatural vision as he proclaims the truth to the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Israel: “*Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God*” (Acts 7:56). 1) Phillip is supernaturally directed to go in the desert to witness to the “*Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candice, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure*” (8:26-27). 2) Saul the arrestor of Christians is arrested and blinded by the Risen Lord on the road to Damascus (9:3-8). 3) Then Saul is commissioned by Christ to “*bear my name before the nations and kings and the sons of Israel*” (9:15). 4) Peter is supernaturally directed to witness to “*Cornelius, a*

centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews” in the Roman Capitol of Caesarea (10:10-20). 5) The first mission team is supernaturally sent out and they first go to the Island of Cyprus where they win their first king, Sergius Paulus, and then choose to evangelize capitols (13:2). 6) Paul is supernaturally directed away from Asia and Bithynia but toward Macedonia, leading to the imperial capitol, Rome (16:6-10). 7) The Lord personally tells Paul to stay in the Capitol of Corinth, “*for I have many people in this city*” (18:9-10). 8) Paul is “*bound in the Spirit*” to go to his capitol, Jerusalem (20:22). 9) The night after being fought over by the Sanhedrin, the Lord stood by Paul’s side saying, “*Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also*” (23:11). 10) Again Paul is supernaturally encouraged amidst a life-threatening storm, “*Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you*” (27:24). Every case of supernatural direction in Acts points to winning leaders!

[IN ROME] “HE STAYED TWO FULL YEARS IN HIS OWN RENTED QUARTERS, AND WAS WELCOMING ALL WHO CAME TO HIM, PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND TEACHING CONCERNING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WITH ALL OPENNESS, UNHINDERED.” ACTS 28:30-31

III. CHRIST’S STRATEGIC MODEL TO WIN THE NATIONS

Many other facts of Acts historically documenting Christ’s leading His Church to “*disciple all the nations*” include the next closest capitol, Samaria, in Acts 1:8; Paul taking the name of the first king he wins on the Island of Cyprus; the fact that 15 of the 19 cities Paul evangelized were capitols and the other four he did not choose; and foremost, Luke bookends both of his books emphasizing leaders. Ultimately, Luke writes from the imperial capitol, Rome, encouraging a Roman Governor, Theophilus, to be Christ’s bold witness strategically for His Kingdom!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Are you like Theophilus, already taught the truth of Christ, having received Jesus as Lord of your life?
- 2) Are you receiving from someone careful investigation into the “*exact truth*” regarding Christ and His commissions?
- 3) Are you willing, as a leader in the capitol, to be Christ’s bold witness strategically for His kingdom?