

Interpreting Acts

The second volume of Luke's two-part work="theological history"

1. Historical
2. To teach what God was accomplishing in the world and what God was commanding believers to do in and through the events narrated
3. Not every minor detail bears theological significance (Acts 27 journey and shipwreck)

Thinking Vertically

- Acts 1:8 as theological framework for how the text will move forward?
 - The Gospel is a message for everyone (Jewish church to Gentile church)
 - Geographic and cultural expansion of Christ's Church over 30 years
- Markers that seem to indicate divisions within this expansion narrative
 - The Christian Mission to the Jews (1:1-12:24)
 - The Church in Jerusalem (1:1-6:7) **6:7
 - The Church in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee (6:8-9:31) **9:31
 - Further advances in Palestine and Syria (9:32-12:24) **12:24
 - The Christian Mission to the Gentiles (12:25-28:31)
 - First Missionary Journey of Paul and the Jerusalem Council (12:25-16:5) **16:5
 - Wide outreach through Paul's Two other missionary journeys (16:6-19:20) **19:20
 - To Jerusalem and then to Rome (19:21-28:31) **28:31
- Think of primary purposes over secondary concerns-
 - Conversion and baptism of Samaritans (8:5-25)
 - Conversion and baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch (8:26-39)
- Treat Luke-Acts as one unit
 - Theological themes
 - Miracles
 - Jesus' passion-Paul's suffering (power also) at end of books

The Significance of Pentecost

- Continuity
- Discontinuity

Acts as Narrative

- Do specific events form a consistent pattern throughout?-normative, consistent principle
- Do the positive models that Luke presents vary from one situation to another?- application may change from one place and time to the next
 - Acts 5:38-39 vs. Acts 19:17-20
 - Acts 6:1-6; 13:1-3; 20:17-38 Church governance questions
 - Acts 2:4; 5:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9 Filling of the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18-21)
- The Expansion of the Gospel...because of who Jesus is and what he did, all people must now repent to receive the forgiveness of sins...Jew-Gentile-everyone
- Cross cultural ministry
 - When preaching to the Jews, Peter and Paul appeal to the fulfillment of scripture (2:14-39; 3:12-26; 13:16-41)
 - When addressing Stoics and Epicureans, Paul explains to them their “unknown god.” (17:22-31)
 - Paul speaks to the superstitious believers in mythology in Lystra and appeals to the testimony of the creator as found in rain and harvest (14:14-18)

The message-the work-the Gospel moving forward and outward...UNHINDERED!