

Wednesday wit the Word

Rev. Ralph Basui Watkins, MFA, DMin, PhD
Servant Pastor / Teacher

Vision:

We exist to develop mature disciples of Jesus Christ who make a real difference in the world by actively seeking the love, justice, freedom, liberation and peace of God.

“We are the church in the heart of Atlanta with Atlanta its heart!”
This is what love looks like.....

The Books Acts: Part #1 Fuel for the Journey: How to Get Through What You Are Going Through

Course Dates: January 9 - March 13, 2019

Course Times: Wednesday - 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Course Description: In this course we will study the first four chapters of the book of Acts. The course looks at the foundation of the birth of the church of Jesus Christ, the role of the Holy Spirit in that birthing process and the key actors who led this movement. Special emphasis will be placed on how these stories speak to us individually and collectively. We will also examine with intense focus the role, power, presence and work of the Holy Spirit.

Learning and Life Application / Integration Goals:

1. Disciples will be familiar with how the church of Jesus Christ was born.
2. Disciples will be able to apply with they learn about the maturation process of the early church leaders to their lives as they seek to mature in Christ.
3. Disciples will become acquainted with the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit and how it is a force that is alive and well in the church today.
4. Disciples will begin to see how the church laid the foundation for the growth of the church and then be able to apply those theological principles and practices to inform the vision realization and growth of God’s church that we call Wheat Street Baptist Church.

Weekly Readings and Topics:

January 9, 2019 - Introduction and Overview of the Book of Acts

January 16, 2019 - The Evidence and Fulfillment of the Resurrection: The Holy Spirit has Come
Acts 1:1-11

January 23, 2019 - Replacing Judas: Are You Ready for Your Next Assignment
Acts 1:12-26

January 30, 2019 - The Power in You and the Church: Keep on Pushing
Acts 2:1-13

February 6, 2019b - The Story and Our Story: What Sustains Us and Propels Us
Acts 2:14-36

February 13, 2019 - Walk Together Children Don't You Get Weary: The Power of
Community
Acts 2:37-47

February 20, 2019 - Loving to Live: Helping Helps Us!
Acts 3:1-26

February 27, 2019 - What Do You Do When People Try to Shut You Down and Shut You
Up?
Acts 4:1-22

March 6, 2019 - The Power of Prayer: Pray with Your Bad Self
Acts 4:23-31

March 13, 2019 - Sharing is Caring: Let Go to Be Lifted Up
Acts 4:32-37

March 20, 2019 - Course Review and End of Course Celebration: Food, Fun and Prizes

An Introduction the Book of Acts

Book Written by Luke - he also wrote the Gospel of Luke

The Purpose of the Book: The book of Acts chronicles the continuing story of the work of Jesus Christ, the birth of the church and the power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. The book testifies to how God used ordinary people to extraordinary things by the power of the Holy Spirit. The book tells the story of the growth, inclusive nature and dynamics of what it takes to be the church and grow the church as witness to who Jesus is. The identity of the church is explored deeply in this book as the church breaks away from its Judaic roots and embraces this radical inclusivity of Jews and Gentiles.

The Foundational Text for the Book of Acts

Acts 1:1-11

1 Theophilus, I first wrote to you about all that Jesus did and taught from the very first 2 until he was taken up to heaven. But before he was taken up, he gave orders to the apostles he had chosen with the help of the Holy Spirit.

3 For forty days after Jesus had suffered and died, he proved in many ways that he had been raised from death. He appeared to his apostles and spoke to them about God's kingdom. 4 While he was still with them, he said:

Don't leave Jerusalem yet. Wait here for the Father to give you the Holy Spirit, just as I told you he has promised to do. 5 John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Is Taken to Heaven

6 While the apostles were still with Jesus, they asked him, "Lord, are you now going to give Israel its own king again?"

7 Jesus said to them, "You don't need to know the time of those events that only the Father controls. 8 But the Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you power. Then you will tell everyone about me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and everywhere in the world." 9 After Jesus had said this and while they were watching, he was taken up into a cloud. They could not see him, 10 but as he went up, they kept looking up into the sky.

Suddenly two men dressed in white clothes were standing there beside them. 11 They said, "Why are you men from Galilee standing here and looking up into the sky? Jesus has been taken to heaven. But he will come back in the same way that you have seen him go." CEV

- What we see is that the church is given power. The power we are given is the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is not to be reduced to a feeling, a shout, a dance, or a run. The Holy Ghost is the power of God that resides in believers to empower them to be and do what God created them for.
- We were created with a God ordained purpose, and we were given gifts to fulfill that purpose. When we operate in the will and ways of God we are doing so by the

power of the Holy Ghost. We are to use our gifts for the ministry God has assigned us, in the faith community that God has called us, for the glory of God.

- When you operate in your area of giftedness you are to do so by the power of the Holy Ghost. When we try to rely on doing what we want without relying on God via prayer, spiritual disciplines, being rooted in the word and ways of God, and divine enablement we will fail. We can't sustain this journey or service we render without the power of the Holy Ghost.
- We have to seek the Holy Ghost; we have to ask God to continue to renew us, change us, renew a clean heart in us, restore us, redirect us and lead us so that we can do what God would have us to do. This is a constant seeking, we are always seeking to grow in God and have more of God's spirit as we get closer to God via worship, study, spiritual disciplines and service. Yes, service. One of the key ways we are empowered by the Holy Spirit is when we do what God has divinely crafted us to do. We are empowered when we serve the least, the lost and the needy.
- The Holy Ghost can cause us to shout, run, dance, speak in tongues and that is a manifestation of the Holy Ghost but I want to make sure we don't reduce it to a feeling. The Holy Ghost is about being filled, anointed and empowered to serve God, give God glory, serve and change the world.
- We are called to share the goodness of God. To tell the world about Jesus is not to condemn others for not knowing but rather to share the love of God in word and deed as we share via acts of love as a testimony that we do know God. We don't have to tell people what we show them. When we show the world what love looks like we are testifying to who God is and how God has made Godself manifest in our lives. We speak louder by what we do than what we say.
- We are called to be witnesses, to testify, to show love in our immediate community. We are to share love inside the walls of the church but more importantly outside the walls of the church. What we see in Acts is a church on the move. A church that is not trying to build buildings and close doors. You see an open inclusive community that is always growing, always meeting needs, always reaching out, always showing love, always having the next conversation, while also caring for those of the gathered community.

This study is not meant to be a mirror for us to look into; we are not so much trying to reflect what Acts was but rather we are called to be informed by this witness. This story is a testimony. It is a way of telling who God is and what God can and will do through God's church.

- We are not here to repeat or replay what we see in the book of Acts but rather we are to ask what would that look like today?
- How does God want to use us to change the world?
- How does God want to grow me, use me and gift me to do ministry in this age in the mission field of Atlanta, our Metropolitan Statistical Area and beyond?
- How do we take the theology and practical principles from the book of Acts and let them speak to us and then inform how we live our faith today?

The Narrative Structure of the Book of Acts

- I. You Will Be My Witnesses in Jerusalem
 - I. Acts 1:15-8:3
- II. You Will Be My Witnesses in All Judea and Samaria
 - I. Acts 8:4-11:18
- III. You Will Be My Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth
 - I. Acts 11:19-28:31

Acts takes us from Jerusalem to Rome. Along the way we learn what it meant to be of the way. According to Luke to be a disciple of Jesus Christ is a learned way of living. We grow to be mature disciples of Jesus Christ by being open to the Holy Spirit, being bathe in prayer, free in giving, taking care of the needs of those in need, being willing to go and do whatever God calls us to and go wherever God sends us. The Apostle are not asking people to come church they are taking the church to the people.

In one sense one could say they are doing what Jesus did and on the other hand they are going beyond what Jesus did. They are doing new things. They are establishing churches. They are developing leaders. They are seeking to convert the unconverted. They are putting their lives on the line for the Gospel. Acts shows us how profound Jesus ministry with the Apostles effected them. You see them doing what they were taught and then taking it to another level. The book challenges us to take ministry seriously. It challenges us to look in the mirror and question if we are doing real ministry, that is making a real difference in the lives of real people. We see the early church in the streets, in the temples, in the city courts doing ministry.

Wheat Street Baptist Church

**Theme 2019:
Making Disciples, that Make Disciples, That Make a Difference...**

“The church in the heart of Atlanta with Atlanta in its heart”

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Reading, Teaching and Preaching through the Book of Acts Bible Reading Schedule 2019

January

Acts 1:1-11	Acts 1:12-26	Acts 2:1-13	Acts 2:14-36
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February

Acts 2:37-42	Acts 2:43-47	Acts 3:1-10	Acts 3:11-26
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March

Acts 4:1-22	Acts 4:23-31	Acts 4:32-37	Acts 5:1-11
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April

Acts 5:12-16	Acts 5:17-41	Acts 6:1-7	Acts 6:8-15
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May

Acts 7:1-53	Acts 7:54-8:1	Acts 8:1-25	Acts 8:26-40
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June

Acts 9:1-19	Acts 9:19-31	Acts 9:32-43	Acts 10:1-33
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July

Acts 10:34-43	Acts 10:44-48	Acts 11:1-18	Acts 11:19-30
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August

Acts 12:1-25	Acts 13:1-12	Acts 13:13-52	Acts 14:1-7
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September

Acts 14:8-20	Acts 15:1-41	Acts 16:1-40	Acts 17:1-33
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October

Acts 18:1-28	Acts 19:1-41	Acts 20:1-38	Acts 21:1-40
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November

Acts 22:1-29	Acts 23:1-35	Acts 24:1-27	Acts 25:1-27
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December

Acts 26:1-32	Acts 27:1-12	Acts 27:13- 44	Acts 28:1-30
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*Note in the case of a five week month, repeat week one's reading for week five.