

Acts 4:12

- Our study will take us on a brief journey through each of the books of the Bible.
- Our aim: To impart perspective and the key to each book.
- Our construction: Key word; key verse; Key to Christ.

Acts

A. Means: Actions of the apostles [Greek Praxeis]).

- a. Luke's second volume having made reference to "The former account I made" (Acts 1:1).
- b. Written to "Theophilus" of Luke's eyewitness accounts from the events prior to and on Pentecost through to the house arrest of Paul in Rome. It therefore covers the years (approx.) AD33 to AD62 and probably recorded in that last year. (There is no mention of Nero AD64 nor the destruction of Jerusalem AD70)
- c. The charge to the apostles to progressively preach (1:8), ascension of Christ and the selection of a replacement for Judas opens the account. The huge response to that preaching (Acts 2) and the rise of opposition by the "stiff-neck" Jews (7:51) set a tone that is all too familiar in today's evangelism. You might split Acts into two sections where Peter and John deal with the evangelism of Jerusalem and Samaria and in the second half Paul's famous missionary journeys set in motion a turning of the world to the point whereby the gospel had been "preached to every creature under heaven" (Colossians 1:23).

B. Keys to Acts:

- a. Key word: Growth.
- b. Key Verses: 1:8; 2:38, 42, 47.
- c. Key Chapter: Chapter 2 "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (v.38)
- d. Key to Christ: Authority "And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:7-8)

Romans

A. Means: To the Roman church of Christ.

B. One of 13 letters dictated by the Apostle Paul (16:22). It could be likened to the letter to the Galatians only in more detail. The key thought is righteousness and how to achieve that thought which is through faith that comes about by the word of God (Rm.1:17; 10:17). A survey of its contents reveals the righteousness of God (1-8) vindication of that righteousness, for Israel rejected God; not the other way round (9-11); the application of that righteousness by transformation of the mind.

C. Keys to Romans:

- a. Key word: Righteousness.
- b. Key verses: Rm.1:17 "the righteous shall live by faith"; Rm.10:17 "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God."
- c. Key chapter: 6-8 the foundation of correct spiritual life including entry into the church via baptism described as a burial leading to a new life (6:1-7). (Baptism is essential to salvation and entry into the church. For more information see tag "Essential Pattern")
- d. Key to Christ: Christ is the second Adam (Rm.5:14) ie the result of Adam's disobedience was death to all mankind (Gen.3); the result of Christ's righteousness is life to those in obedience to Christ's law.

I Corinthians

A. Means: From Pros Corinthians A added sometime later to indicate first letter written to the Corinthian congregation.

- a. Paul is the writer who uses "I" to these people he knew personally (Acts 18:1ff). Written to a congregation at the crossroads of Asia and Europe i.e. strategic trading city (Pop. 700k) on an isthmus that allowed boats to cross and avoid hazardous travel around southern Greece. Many synagogues of the dispersed Jews. Paul would be replaced by Apollos. Time: AD 56.
- b. From the content it is obvious the congregation had many problems that needed sorting from division (1:10) to correct method of worship (11:17ff), misuse of miraculous gifts (14 et al) and denial of resurrection (15 et al).

B. Keys to I Corinthians:

- a. Key word: Corrections.
- b. Key verses: (1:10) "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment"; (4:6) "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another"

- c. Key chapter: 15 “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” (15:14).
- d. Key to Christ: He is the wisdom from God for righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

II Corinthians

- A. Means: The letter B added to indicate the last letter written to the Corinthians.
- B. Just like the first this letter is also from the mind of Paul. The letter is a follow-up to first congratulate the congregation for putting into action the righteousness required i.e. repentance (7:9-10), concerning the wrong doing highlighted in the first letter. The last part of the letter (10-13) Paul answers the charge of perceived cowardice for not coming to them in person (Chapter 11 is very sobering) and the punishing of those who refuse to bow to his apostolic authority (cf Matt.18:15-20).
- C. Keys to II Corinthians:
 - a. Key word: Defence of ministry.
 - b. Key verses: 5:17-20 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.”
 - c. Key chapter: 8-9 the picture of sacrifice of the Macedonians during their plight of destitution sends the message of giving.
 - d. Key to Christ: Love and reconciliation upon true commitment to repent (Chapter 7:9-10).

Galatians

- A. Means: To those in Galatia.
- B. Author is Paul “I, Paul” (5:2). The reason for the letter can be gleaned from 3:1 “O Foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you...?” It seems they had been infiltrated by Judaizers who were declaring that one is justified by the Law of Moses as well as adhering to Christ the thought of which Paul eloquently destroys in chapters 3 and 4. First, however, he reinforces his authority as an apostle in chapter 1 declaring his credentials are exactly the same as for the other apostles as per Acts 1:21 i.e. accompanied Jesus and a witness of His resurrection (1:17). His repudiation of Peter and other convert's bigotry is a standard of admonishment that one should use today (2:11-21). The fruits of the Spirit and the application of such is the standard by which the Christian should walk (5-6).
- C. Keys to Galatians:
 - a. Key word: Freedom from the Law of Moses.
 - b. Key verses: 1:6-9 “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”
 - c. Key chapter: 3 Paul's reputation of the Law of Moses being able to justify putting it into the category of “a different gospel” (1:6).
 - d. Key to Christ: Being “when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (4:4).