

R. Albert Mohler Jr.

Acts 1–12

The Church Is Born



 8-Session Bible Study

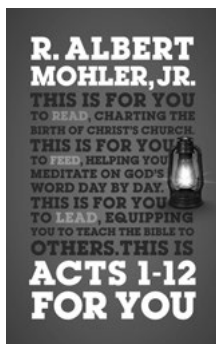
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Acts 1–12

The Church Is Born



✔ **8-Session Bible Study**



Acts 1–12 For You

These studies are adapted from *Acts 1–12 For You*. If you are reading *Acts 1–12 For You* alongside this Good Book Guide, here is how the studies in this booklet link to the chapters of *Acts 1–12 For You*:

Study One > Ch 1	Study Five > Ch 7
Study Two > Ch 3-5	Study Six > Ch 8
Study Three > Ch 5	Study Seven > Ch 9-10
Study Four > Ch 6	Study Eight > Ch 11

Find out more about *Acts 1–12 For You* at:
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Acts 1–12: The Church Is Born

A Good Book Guide

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Introduction

One of the Bible writers described God's word as "a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" (Psalm 119:105, NIV). God gave us the Bible to tell us about who he is and what he wants for us. He speaks through it by his Spirit and lights our way through life.

That means that we need to look carefully at the Bible and uncover its meaning—but we also need to apply what we've discovered to our lives.

Good Book Guides are designed to help you do just that. The sessions in this book are interactive and easy to lead. They're perfect for use in groups or for personal study.

Let's take a look at what is included in each session.

Talkabout: Every session starts with an ice-breaker question, designed to get people talking around a subject that links to the Bible study.

Investigate: These questions help you explore what the passage is about.

Apply: These questions are designed to get you thinking practically: what does this Bible teaching mean for you and your church?

Explore More: These optional sections help you to go deeper or to explore another part of the Bible which connects with the main passage.

Getting Personal: These sections are a chance for personal reflection. Some groups may feel comfortable discussing these, but you may prefer to look at them quietly as individuals instead—or leave them out.

Pray: Here, you're invited to pray in the light of the truths and challenges you've seen in the study.

Each session is also designed to be easily split into two! Watch out for the **Apply** section that comes halfway through, and stop there if you haven't got time to do the whole thing in one go.

In the back of the book, you'll find a **Leader's Guide**, which provides helpful notes on every question, along with everything else that group leaders need in order to facilitate a great session and help the group uncover the riches of God's light-giving word.

Why Study Acts 1 – 12?

The story of Jesus does not end with the resurrection of Jesus or even with the ascension of Jesus.

This is why Luke decided (or, from the heavenly rather than human perspective, why Luke was inspired by God's Spirit) to write a second volume to follow his Gospel, to chronicle the events of the early church—what we call the book of Acts.

We might also call it “The Book of What Jesus Did Next.” In Acts 1:1, Luke states that his first book was about all that Jesus “began to do and teach.” The implication is that Acts is the record of what Jesus continued to do and to teach, by his Spirit, in his church.

The first twelve chapters of Acts include some of the most famous portions of Scripture: the ascension of Jesus; the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost; the first Christian martyrdom; the conversion of the church's arch-persecutor, Saul; and the coming of the gospel to the Gentiles. Behind each event the sovereign hand of God is at work, giving birth to his church, shaping his church, using his church, and growing his church.

We meet so many individuals in these chapters, but God is always the primary actor. He uses the most unlikely of people to spread the gospel, like the impetuous Peter or even the murderous Saul. But it is *his* work, through people. Acts reminds us that God is sovereign in our lives and in his world, even when we don't understand what he is doing. We can be confident that the Lord is building his church and pursuing the good of his people—and we can feel privileged that he calls us to join him in this work.

These eight studies will chart the birth of the church—a church that still stands, that we are members of by faith, and that has the same mission as the one started in Acts: a task unfinished, of being Christ's witnesses “to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).



Acts c. 30-44 AD

- c. 30 Jesus ascends;
Pentecost
- c. 35 Paul converted
- c. 44 Peter imprisoned;
Herod Agrippa dies



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Promises

Acts 1:1-26

Talkabout

1. What is the hardest thing you have ever been asked to do?

- Did you back out or did you take it on? If the latter, were you successful, and why?

Investigate

 Read Acts 1:1-11

DICTIONARY

Was taken up (v 2): ascended into heaven.

Apostles (v 2): the men chosen by Jesus to be witnesses to his resurrection and to teach with his authority.

John (v 5): John the Baptist. (See Luke 3:1-17.)

Restore the kingdom (v 6): bring about all God's Old Testament promises.

Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria (v 8): see map on opposite page.

2. How does Luke describe what he recounted in "the first book"—the Gospel of Luke" (v 1-2)?
3. What did Jesus do after he had risen (v 3)?
4. What did Jesus tell his apostles...
 - they must do (v 4-5)?
 - they must be (v 8)?
5. Imagine you were one of those first followers, in a city that killed your King and hates your message. How would you have felt hearing verse 8?
6. After Jesus ascended back to heaven, what did the angels (the "two men ... in white robes") most want his followers to know (v 10-11)?

Explore More | OPTIONAL

Jesus' ascension into heaven is essential to the Christian faith.

- What do these passages teach us about the significance of the ascension?
 - Philippians 2:6-11
 - Ephesians 1:20-23
 - Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:23-25
-

Apply

7. What difference should it make to us to remember that "this Jesus ... will come in the same way as [the apostles] saw him go" (v 11)?

8. What part do we have to play in the "Great Commission" of verse 8?

- What happens if we forget about the role of the Holy Spirit in this?
- What difference does it make if we know we have received his power?

Getting Personal | OPTIONAL

Do you tend to seek to obey Christ without relying on the Spirit's power, but rather on your own? Or do you tend to shrink back from witnessing about Christ because you feel powerless to do so?

How does verse 8 both encourage and challenge you? How do you need to change your attitude or your actions?

Investigate

 **Read Acts 1:12-26**

DICTIONARY

Peter and John... (v 13): this verse names all the original disciples, except Judas the betrayer.

With one accord (v 14): in unity with each other.

Lots (v 26): dice used to make decisions.

9. What did these Christians do while they waited for the Spirit (v 12-14)?

10. What do verses 15-26 teach us about...

- what happened to Judas after he betrayed Jesus?

- the Old Testament Scriptures?

- the qualifications for being an apostle?

Getting Personal | OPTIONAL

Judas' life and death is a sobering reminder to all of us of the need to genuinely examine ourselves to see if we are truly trusting in Christ.

None of us are above or beyond abandoning Christ. We must always be on guard against chasing after fleeting riches. Instead, we must walk each day in faith and repentance.

What things in your life most tempt you to betray Christ for the things of this world? How is knowing Christ better than those things?

What will obedience, and/or repentance, look like for you?

Apply

11. How do these verses encourage us to rely on the Old Testament Scripture and the apostles' teaching (that is, the New Testament)?

- What would true reliance on their authority look like in our day-to-day lives?

12. How will you encourage each other to take on the hard but Spirit-enabled challenge of taking the gospel message "to the end of the earth"? What will that mean for each of you this week?

Pray

Thank God...

- *that Jesus is ascended and reigning.*
- *for the charge he gave to, and gives to, his church, to share the gospel throughout the earth.*
- *for the Spirit-given power to fulfill that commission.*

Ask God...

- *to show you your part in that commission, both as a church and as individuals.*
- *to help you rely on his Spirit as you seek to share Christ.*
- *to help you rely on the authority of the apostles in your daily lives (speak to God about any ways you need his help specifically to do this).*