

LIMITLESS

THE GOSPEL IN THE BOOK OF ACTS



3rd
EDITION
WEEKS 11-13

ROCKYPC SERIES COMPANION

Term 2, 2020

LIMITLESS

THE GOSPEL IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

In the book of Acts, we're going to see the gospel spread from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth, just as Jesus said it would, and despite a number of obstacles and trials that come along nothing can stop it. We're going to see the gospel spread to all different kinds of people, inviting them all into God's kingdom. We're going to see the power of the Holy Spirit, who enables people to see the glory of Jesus.

- We're going to see that the gospel is limitless — It's for everyone!
- The spread of the gospel is limitless — Nothing can stop it and nowhere is too far for it to go.
- The Holy Spirit is limitless — Bringing power, healing and faith to everyone who believes the good news.
- The power of the gospel is limitless — Bringing new life to the ends of the earth.

We're hoping this series will give us greater confidence to know that God is at work in us and at work in our city and region. There is no one beyond the reach of the gospel, so we can have confidence to bear witness to Jesus and his resurrection.

There is also a call to consider the resurrection for ourselves. The main characters in each chapter stake their lives on the truth of the resurrection. Rather than a comfortable existence, this book should shake us and provoke us to consider our own walk with Jesus. Are we prepared to stake our lives on it, to the point of expecting and rejoicing in suffering for the name of Jesus?

It is our hope that we'll press on to grow as disciples who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others, to grow the renown of the gospel and to grow the church, all for the glory of Jesus. We can only do this, under God, in the power of His Spirit, so will you join us in praying that God's Spirit would be powerfully at work in us.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ACTS TO GET STARTED

Acts was written by Luke, who accompanied Paul on his missionary journeys, and it's second in a two part series that shows all Jesus began and continues to do in the world, through and for his people.

In Luke 1v1-4, we're told:

¹ Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, ² just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. ³ With this in mind, since I myself have *carefully investigated everything from the beginning*, I too decided to write *an orderly account* for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ *so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.*

Luke carefully investigated all that he wrote down so we may know the certainty of the things taught to us about Jesus and it's fair to say that the same method and goal is intended for Acts. In Acts 1v1-11, Luke writes:

¹ In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about *all that Jesus began to do and to teach* ² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³ After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."

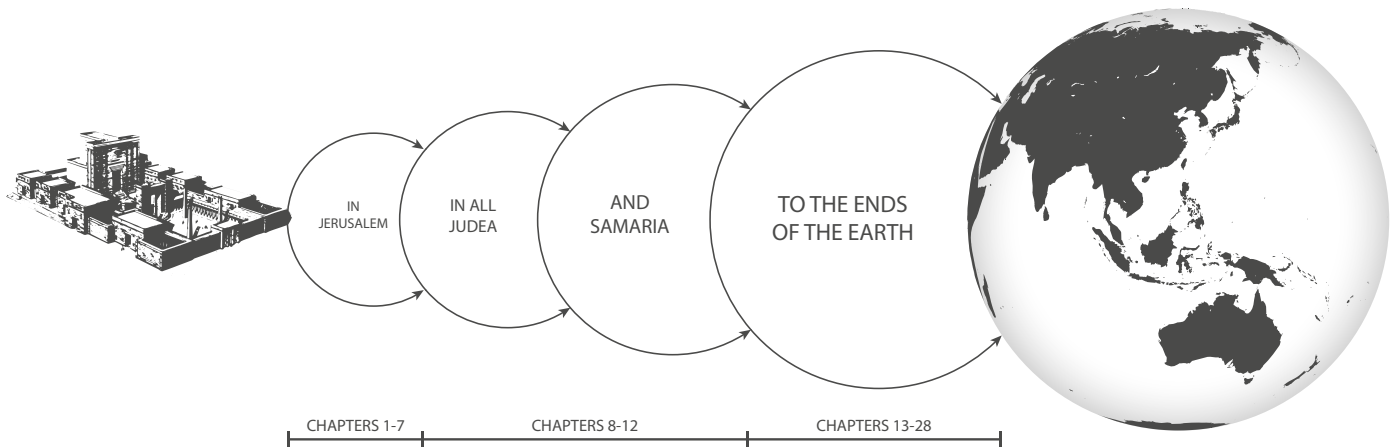
⁶ Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? *This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.*"

Where Luke's Gospel is about what Jesus began, Acts is about what Jesus continues through the work of His Spirit and through the witness of His Apostles. Acts tells the story of the gospel, that is, the story of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, spreading to the ends of the earth. The diagram below shows how the gospel grows and shows how the spread can be tracked through the chapters in Acts.

WITNESSES



μάρτυς = pronounced 'martus' = **witness**

- one who testifies in legal matters
- one who affirms or attests
- one who witnesses at cost of life

THE PLAN FOR TERM 2

On Sundays, we'll have the videos on [facebook](#), [youtube](#), [rockypc.org.au](#). rockypc KIDSCHURCH and rockypc YOUTH will be following the same series. Growth Group meetings from week to week will take place over ZOOM — speak to Matt for the details.

Week Starting	Passage for Bible Talk (click link to go to page)	pg. #	Growth Group Study (following Bible Talks)	pg. #
Sunday 19th April	Acts 1v1-11	1	Witnesses!	2
Sunday 26th April	Acts 1v12-2v47	4	Word & Spirit	5
Sunday 3rd May	Acts 3v1-4v31	7	No Other Name!	8
Sunday 10th May	Acts 5v12-42	10	It'll Never Fail	11
Sunday 17th May	Acts 6v1-8v1	13	Trouble, Inside & Out	14
Sunday 24th May	Acts 8v1-40	16	The Great Power Of God	17
Sunday 31st May	Acts 9v1-31	19	Changed Lives	20
Sunday 7th June	Acts 9v32-12v24	22	Everyone!	23
Sunday 14th June	Acts 12v25-13v52	25	Joy & Jealousy	26
Sunday 21st June	Acts 14v1-28	28	Turning To The Living God	29
Sunday 28th June	Acts 15v1-35		No Burdens	
Sunday 5th July	Acts 15v36-16v40		Set Free	
Sunday 12th July	Acts 17v1-18v22		Knowing God	
Sunday 19th July	COMING IN THE LAST EDITION			
Sunday 26th July				
Sunday 2nd August				
Sunday 9th August	CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER - WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?			
Sunday 16th August	CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER - WHY IS THERE EVIL?			
Sunday 23rd August	CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER - IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH?			

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**BIBLE
TALK**

WEEK 11 — NO BURDENS

ACTS 15v1-35

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.) THERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT FIND HELPFUL TOO.

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My Prayer In Response To God's Word:

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GROWTH
GROUP
STUDY

WEEK 11 — NO BURDENS

ACTS 15v1-35

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

GETTING STARTED

What different clubs and organisations are you a member of? Were there any special conditions or requirements for your membership to be allowed?

READ ACTS 15v1-2

1. What have we already seen in the story of Acts that helps us understand the concern in v1?
2. What possible motivations might lie behind this statement, positive or negative?

READ ACTS 15v3-12

3. According to Peter, what did God require of the Gentiles for them to be saved?
4. How does Peter describe the law and circumcision? What does v10 mean?

For a Jew, the law of Moses and circumcision were central to their identity as the people of God. The problem was that they were unable to keep the law, and circumcision was only an outward sign that didn't necessarily translate into a life that brought glory to God. In this story, clearly some Jews have recognised that Jesus is the Messiah who fulfils the law and prophets, but they haven't moved on from their allegiance to Moses and the law.

5. What has changed so that non-Jewish people can now come to God without the need for outward signs and a commitment to the Old Testament laws?

READ ACTS 15v13-29

6. What is James' verdict on the issue and on what basis does he come to this position?

7. What do you think 15v20-21 are trying to convey?

In his first letter to the Corinthian church, Paul picks up on these concerns.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 6v12-20, 8v1-13 & 10v14-11v1

8. Has Paul now imposed a “law” for the Gentiles that the apostles didn’t in Acts 15? How do you understand it? How should Gentile Christians use their freedom?

growing disciples

At **rockypc** we want to be **growing disciples who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God’s word helps us grow.

SACRIFICE
ATTITUDE BEFORE
ACTION

Have you fallen into the trap of thinking God wants an outward sign and obedience from you in order to be saved? — How is Acts 15 helpful if this is the case?

Have you laid a heavy burden on others who are coming to faith in Jesus? — How might the reminder that we’re all saved by grace, through faith in Jesus, guide your repentance and your conversations?

SERVE
HUMILITY BEFORE
HONOUR

Law and circumcision are not required now. We have freedom in the gospel. But have you taken that freedom for granted by not considering the impact of your actions on others? — What needs to change in your attitude and actions to help you serve those around you?

SPEAK
TO GOD ABOUT
PEOPLE
TO PEOPLE ABOUT
GOD

Someone says to you “Christians have to keep the Old Testament law”. How do you respond? How is Acts 15 helpful?

Who can you speak about Jesus with this week? Ask God for His Spirit to help you express your freedom in the gospel, but also for wisdom to consider the needs of others without burdening them with laws they cannot keep.

Here are a few things we’ll be praying about as we consider Acts 15:

- *We’ll praise God for his undeserved grace and kindness to us so we don’t have to behave in a certain way in order to be saved, no matter how impure we are. We’ll ask him to grant us faith that he will purify us and make us his people.*
- *We’ll ask God to change our allegiance to the idols we follow, to be wholehearted in following Jesus instead. Because he has saved us, we’ll ask God to change our thoughts, motives, actions and desires.*
- *We’ll keep praying that God would give 8000 new people to Jesus in our generation in Rockhampton & Gracemere for a start, because Jesus is worthy of praise and because he offers his salvation to everyone. We’ll pray for opportunities every day, every where we go, to speak to every one about Jesus.*
- *We’ll pray for our mission partner, Cam, that he would continue to preach that anyone can be saved and transformed by Jesus, and that he’d have the joy of seeing God do that work.*

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**BIBLE
TALK**

WEEK 12 — SET FREE

ACTS 15v36-16v40

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A Key Verse:

My Prayer In Response To God's Word:

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GROWTH
GROUP
STUDY

WEEK 12 — SET FREE

ACTS 15v36-16v40

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GETTING STARTED

Are you much of a singer? What makes you want to sing? What stops you from singing? Name a song that gets stuck in your head.

READ ACTS 15v36-16v10

1. This is the start of Paul's second missionary journey. What questions does it raise for you regarding:
 - Paul and his companions?
 - Paul's conduct with Timothy?
 - The Holy Spirit's guidance/direction of events?

READ ACTS 16v11-15

2. What do you learn about Philippi and its inhabitants? What might you expect to happen when Paul starts preaching about Jesus?
3. How is Lydia affected by Paul's message?

READ ACTS 16v16-24

4. Paul's encounter with the demon-possessed slave girl is strange because she seems to be telling the truth and yet Paul stops her proclamation. Why do you think he does it? How is the slave girl's life transformed by the gospel?
5. In previous chapters of Acts, the problems for Paul and his companions arise because of jealousy from the Jews. Now there is a different motivation. What are the girl's owners concerned about?

READ ACTS 16:25-40

6. How is the jailer's life transformed? What makes the difference for him? What is the effect on him?

7. Imagine the jailer going back to work the next day. What difference do you think his new found faith in Jesus would make?

growing disciples

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SACRIFICE
ATTITUDE BEFORE
ACTION

Have you asked God to open your heart so you can accept his word? — What is stopping you from making that request? Do it today.

How is your life being transformed by Jesus? Can you think of specific examples of the difference he is making to your life every day?

SERVE
HUMILITY BEFORE
HONOUR

Lydia's life was transformed and she immediately opened her home to Paul. The jailer's life was transformed and he immediately opened his home too. It would seem that hospitality is one possible mark of a transformed life. Brainstorm with your group different ways that you, your families and the wider **rockypc** community might demonstrate the same openness and welcome to others.

SPEAK
TO GOD ABOUT
PEOPLE
TO PEOPLE ABOUT
GOD

From Acts 16, how would you explain the difference Jesus makes to someone who is investigating Jesus?

Who can you speak about Jesus with this week? Ask God for His Spirit to powerfully act in you, and them, so that you speak boldly and so that they hear and respond.

Here are a few things we'll be praying about as we consider Acts 16:

- We'll praise God for sending Jesus to set us free from all of our sin, guilt, and shame.
- We'll ask God to change our hearts that we might live transformed lives that show the reality of Jesus resurrection.
- We'll keep praying that God would give 8000 new people to Jesus in our generation for a start, because Jesus is worthy of praise and because he offers his salvation to everyone. We'll pray for opportunities everyday, every where we go, to speak to every one about Jesus
- We'll pray for our mission partner Cam, that he might boldly share the gospel and people in his country might turn to Jesus and be transformed and set free.

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**BIBLE
TALK**

WEEK 13 — KNOWING GOD

ACTS 17v1-18v22

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.) THERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT FIND HELPFUL TOO.

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Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My Prayer In Response To God's Word:

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GROWTH
GROUP
STUDY

WEEK 13 — KNOWING GOD

ACTS 17v1-18v22

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GETTING STARTED

If your friends/family only had one word to describe you, what would they say?

READ ACTS 17v1-15

1. What pattern do you see emerging when Paul travels to a new city?
2. What is the basis for the argument against Paul? Is it true?
3. What is notable about what happens in Berea?

READ ACTS 17v16-34

EPICUREANS	STOICS
believed the greatest pursuit in life was simple pleasures like living peacefully with good friends and no worries.	believed living virtuously with good morals made you happy, so they focused on being wise, just, courageous and self-controlled.
believed that the gods were distant and disinterested and death was the end of your existence.	believed reason was the ultimate god, and when you died you were re-absorbed into the universe.

4. Even though they have different beliefs, what does Paul want to make known to both groups? How is this message different from what he's been saying in the synagogues?
5. What part of Athenian culture is Paul's entry point to talking about his God? In what ways do you think this approach and message might be helpful to your friends and family in Rockhampton and Gracemere?
6. What do we learn about God in 17v24-31? How does he differ from the Greek gods?

READ ACTS 18v1-22

7. Compare the charge against Paul in Corinth with the one in Thessalonica. What is different? Is this accusation true?

8. Do you think God’s reassurance to Paul in 18v9-10 is just as applicable to us today? Why/why not?

growing disciples

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SACRIFICE
ATTITUDE BEFORE
ACTION

What is something that has amazed you about the way God is described in this passage?

Some people were always offended by the news about Jesus. If Paul preached this sermon in Rockhampton, what do you think people would find offensive?

What is stopping you from seeking God and repenting?

SERVE
HUMILITY BEFORE
HONOUR

What steps can you take to understand the culture and time we live in so that you can understand the worldview of your non-believing family and friends? Books? Podcasts? Blogs? Questions to ask?

SPEAK
TO GOD ABOUT
PEOPLE
TO PEOPLE ABOUT
GOD

What can you learn from Paul’s approach to preaching the gospel that will help you speak with your family and friends about Jesus?

Our post-modern culture is often wary of a meta-narrative when someone claims to have the one true story that explains and overrides all other stories. So how would you explain what Paul says to someone who is investigating Jesus?

Here are a few things we’ll be praying about as we consider Acts 17-18:

- We’ll praise God as the creator and sustainer of the universe and everything in it and who gives everyone life, breath and everything else and we’ll thank God for Jesus the just judge who conquered death once and for all.
- Pray that we would worship the one true God who offers forgiveness and new life to all who believe in Jesus.
- We’ll keep praying that God would give 8000 new people to Jesus in our generation in Rockhampton & Gracemere for a start, because Jesus is worthy of praise and because he offers his salvation to everyone. We’ll pray for opportunities every day, every where we go, to speak to every one about Jesus.
- We’ll pray for our mission partner, Cam, that as he speaks people in his country would recognise the true God and that they would rejoice in knowing Him.