

Studies In The First Church

Church of God of Prophecy

Daryl Clark, Pastor/Teacher

Dr. Willie J. Bolden, Instructor

August 12, 2015

Principle One

- The first principle is to note the historical setting in which a biblical book was written and the particular historical occasion for its authorship.
- The original author had a purpose, a message to communicate.
- The text cannot mean something to us that it never meant to the original, ancient, inspired author. His intent—not our historical, emotional, cultural, personal or denominational need—is the key

Principle Two

- The second principle is to identify the literary units. Every biblical book is a unified document. Interpreters have no right to isolate one aspect of truth by excluding others.
- Therefore, we must strive to understand the purpose of the whole biblical book before we interpret the individual literary units. The individual parts—chapters, paragraphs, or verses—cannot mean what the whole unit does not mean.

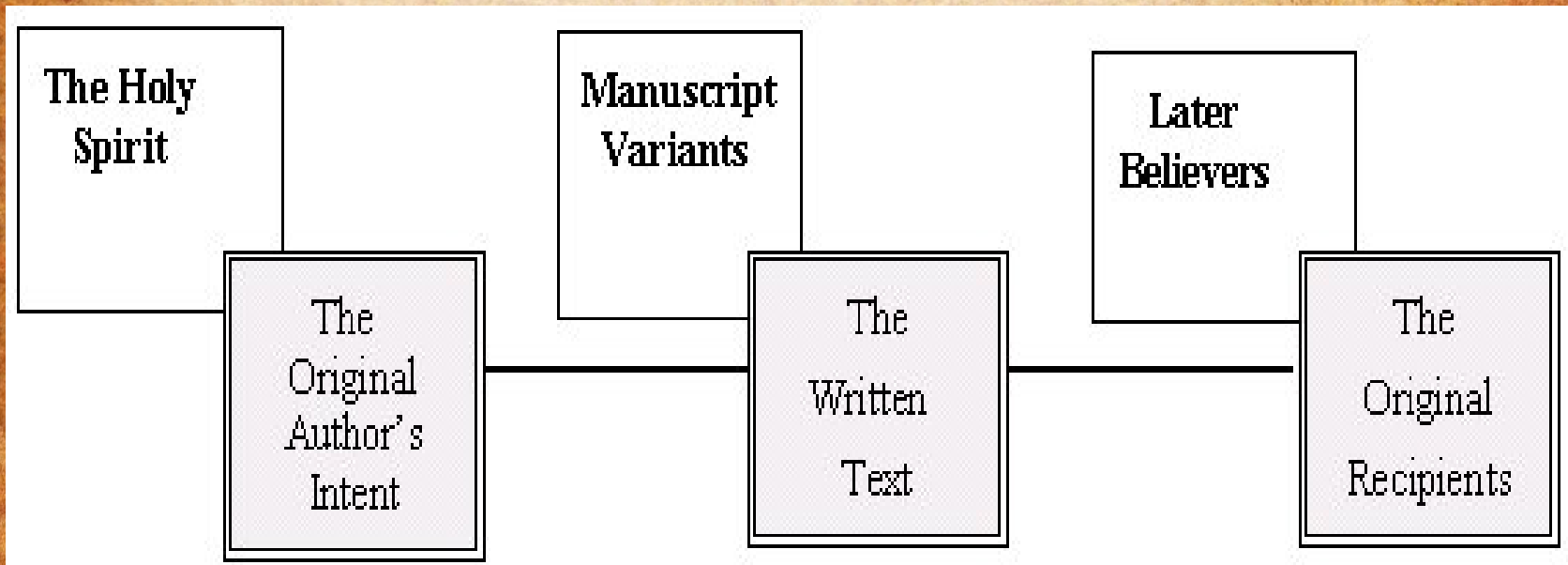
Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. iii). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Principle Three

- The third principle is to read the Bible in different translations in order to grasp the widest possible range of meaning that biblical words or phrases may have.
- Often a Greek phrase or word can be understood in several ways. These different translations bring out these options and help to identify and explain the Greek manuscript variations.
- These do not affect doctrine, but they do help us to try to get back to the original text penned by an inspired ancient writer.

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. iv). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

In the past, different reading techniques have focused on one of the three components. But to truly affirm the unique inspiration of the Bible, a modified diagram is more appropriate:



The Spiritual Aspect of Interpretation

The following checklist will be helpful:

- A. Pray for the Spirit's help (cf. 1 Cor. 1:26–2:16).
- B. Pray for personal forgiveness and cleansing from known sin (cf. 1 John 1:9).
- C. Pray for a greater desire to know God (cf. Ps. 19:7–14; 42:1ff.; 119:1ff).
- D. Apply any new insight immediately to your own life.
- E. Remain humble and teachable.

Introduction

- Acts forms an indispensable link between the accounts of Jesus' life (Gospels), their preaching in Acts, their interpretation, and the application in the Apostolic Letters of the New Testament.

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 1). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Author

- A. The book is anonymous, but Luke's authorship is strongly implied.
- 1. The unique and surprising "we" sections (16:10–17 [second missionary journey at Philippi]; 20:5–15; 21:1–18 [end of third missionary journey] and 27:1–28:16 [Paul sent as prisoner to Rome]) strongly imply Luke as the author.
- 2. The connection between the third Gospel and Acts is obvious when one compares **Luke 1:1–4 with Acts 1:1–2.**
- 3. Luke, a Gentile physician, is mentioned as a companion of Paul in Col. 4:10–14, Philemon 24, and 2 Timothy 4:11. Luke is the only Gentile writer in the NT.

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 1). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

The purpose of the book of Acts was to document the rapid growth of the followers of Jesus from Jewish roots to worldwide ministry, from the locked upper room to the palace of Caesar:

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 3). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Acts is obviously related to the misunderstanding that surrounded the death of Jesus for treason. Apparently, Luke is writing to Gentiles (Theophilus, possibly a Roman official). He uses (1) the speeches of Peter, Stephen, and Paul to show the scheming of the Jews and (2) the positiveness of Roman governmental officials toward Christianity. The Romans had nothing to fear from the followers of Jesus.

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 3). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

- Luke not only defended Christianity before the Roman government, but he also defended Paul before the Gentile church. Paul was repeatedly attacked by Jewish groups (Judaizers of Galatians, the “super apostles” of 2 Cor. 10–13;) and Hellenistic groups. Luke shows Paul’s normalcy by clearly revealing his heart and theology in his travels and sermons.

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 4).
Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

THE *KERYGMA* (Proclaim) OF THE EARLY CHURCH

- A. The promises by God made in the Old Testament have now been fulfilled with the coming of Jesus the Messiah (Acts 2:30; 3:19, 24; 10:43; 26:6–7, 22; Rom. 1:2–4; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:1–2; 1 Peter 1:10–12; 2 Peter 1:18–19).
- B. Jesus was anointed as Messiah by God at His baptism (Acts 10:38).
- C. Jesus began His ministry in Galilee after His baptism (Acts 10:37).
- D. His ministry was characterized by doing good and performing mighty works (miracles) by means of the power of God (Mark 10:45; Acts 2:22; 10:38).

- E. The Messiah was crucified according to the eternal purpose of God (Mark 10:45; John 3:16; Acts 2:23; 3:13–15, 18; 4:11; 10:39; 26:23; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 1:17–18; 15:3; Gal. 1:4; Heb. 1:3; 1 Peter 1:2, 19; 3:18; 1 John 4:10).
- F. He was raised from the dead and appeared to His disciples (Acts 2:24, 31–32; 3:15, 26; 10:40–41; 17:31; 26:23; Rom. 8:34; 10:9; 1 Cor. 15:4–7, 12ff; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Peter 1:2; 3:18, 21).
- G. Jesus was exalted by God and given the name “Lord” (Acts 2:25–29, 33–36; 3:13; 10:36; Rom. 8:34; 10:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22).

H. He gave the Holy Spirit to form the new community of God (Acts 1:8; 2:14–18, 38–39; 10:44–47; 1 Peter 1:12).

I. He will come again for judgment and the restoration of all things (Acts 3:20–21; 10:42; 17:31; 1 Cor. 15:20–28; 1 Thess. 1:10).

J. All who hear the message should repent and be baptized (Acts 2:21, 38; 3:19; 10:43, 47–48; 17:30; 26:20; Rom. 1:17; 10:9; 1 Peter 3:21).

“Theophilus” This name is formed from (1) God (*Theos*) and (2) brotherly love (*philos*). It can be translated “God lover,” “friend of God,” or “loved by God.”

Acts Chapters 1 & 2

“He had by the Holy Spirit” This is the first mention of “the Holy Spirit,” who is so important in Acts. In the OT “the Spirit of God” (*ruach*) was a force which accomplished YHWH’s purpose, but there is no hint that it was personal (OT monotheism). However, in the NT the full personality and personhood of the Spirit is documented.

1. He can be blasphemed (Matt. 12:31; Mark 3:29)
2. He teaches (Luke 12:12; John 14:26)
3. He bears witness (John 15:26)
4. He convicts, guides (John 16:7–15)
5. He is called “who” (*hos*, Eph. 1:14)
6. He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30)
7. He can be quenched (1 Thess. 5:19)

John

Matthew

Luke

1 Corinthians

Jerusalem Appearances

Mary (Jn. 20:15)

Women (Mt. 28:9)

Simon (Lk. 24:34)

Cephas (1 Cor. 15:5)

two on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:15)

disciples (Lk. 24:36)

the Twelve (1 Cor. 15:5)

ten disciples (Jn. 20:17)

eleven disciples (Jn. 20:26)

John

Matthew

Luke

1 Corinthians

Galilee Appearances

500+ believers (1 Cor. 15:6; possibly linked to Matt. 28:16–20)

James (1 Cor. 15:7)

seven disciples (Jn. 21:1)

the disciples (Mt. 28:16–20)

Jerusalem Appearances

the Ascension (Lk. 24:50–51)

all the apostles (1 Cor. 15:7)

The Kingdom of God

In the OT YHWH was thought of as the King of Israel (cf. 1 Sam. 8:7; Ps. 10:16; 24:7–9; 29:10; 44:4; 89:18; 95:3; Isa. 43:15; 44:4, 6) and the Messiah as the ideal king (cf. Ps. 2:6). With the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem (6–4 b.c.) the kingdom of God broke into human history with new power and redemption (new covenant, cf. Jer. 31:31–34; Ezek. 36:17–36). John the Baptist proclaimed the nearness of the kingdom (cf. Matt. 3:2; Matt. 1:15). Jesus clearly taught that the kingdom was present in Himself and His teachings (cf. Matt. 4:17, 23; 9:35; 10:7; 11:11–12; 12:28; 16:19; Mark 12:34; Luke 10:9, 11; 11:20; 12:31–32; 16:16; 17:21). Yet the kingdom is also future (cf. Matt. 16:28; 24:14; 26:29; Mark 9:1; Luke 21:31; 22:16, 18).

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 10). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

This tension is caused by the two comings of Christ. The OT focused only on one coming of God's Messiah—a military, judgmental, glorious coming—but the NT shows that He came the first time as the Suffering Servant of Isa. 53 and the humble king of Zech. 9:9. The two Jewish ages, the age of wickedness and the new age of righteousness, overlap. Jesus currently reigns in the hearts of believers, but will one day reign over all creation. He will come as the OT predicted. Believers live in “the already” versus “the not yet” of the kingdom of God

Uttley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 10). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

The Waiting Period

“to wait for what the Father had promised” In 2:16–21 Peter relates this to the eschatological prophecy of Joel 2:28–32. They waited ten days until Pentecost. Luke has specifically designated “the Father’ promise” as the Holy Spirit (cf. Luke 24:49; Acts 2:33). Jesus had previously spoken to them about the coming of the Spirit in John 14–16. However, it is possible that Luke understands the Father’s promise not as one thing only (i.e. the Holy Spirit), but also that the OT promised salvation will be brought to Israel in the person of the Messiah (cf. Acts 2:39; 13:23, 32; 26:6).

John The Baptist

“John” All four Gospels (cf. Matt. 3:1–12; Mark 1:2–8; Luke 3:15–17; John 1:6–8, 19–28) tell of the ministry of John the Baptist. “John” was the shortened form of the Hebrew name Johanan, which meant “YHWH is gracious” or “gift of YHWH.” His name was significant because, like all biblical names, it pointed toward God’s purpose for his life. John was the last of the Old Testament prophets. There had not been a prophet in Israel since Malachi, around 430 b.c. His very presence caused great spiritual excitement among the people of Israel.

Water Baptism

“baptized with water” Baptism was a common rite among Jews of the first and second century, but only in connection with proselytes. If someone from a Gentile background wanted to become a full child of Israel, he had to accomplish three tasks: (1) circumcision, if male; (2) self-baptism by immersion, in the presence of three witnesses; and (3) a sacrifice in the Temple if possible.

Utle, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 11). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Baptism of The Holy Spirit

“you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” This phrase can refer to two events: (1) becoming a Christian, (cf. 1 Cor. 12:13) or (2) in this context, the promised infusion of spiritual power for effective ministry. John the Baptist often spoke of Jesus’ ministry by this phrase, (cf. Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16–17; John 1:33).

This is in contrast to John’s baptism. The Messiah will inaugurate the new age of the Spirit. His baptism will be with (or “in” or “by”) the Spirit.

The Core Passage: Act 1:8

1:8 “but you will receive power” Notice that the coming of the Holy Spirit is linked to power and witness. Acts is about “witness” (i.e. *martus*). *This theme dominates the book (cf. 1:8, 22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39, 41; 13:31; 22:15, 20; 26:16). The church has been given her assignment—witness to the gospel of Christ! The Apostles were witnesses of Jesus’ life and teaching, now they were witnesses about His life and teaching. Effective witness only occurs by means of the Spirit’s power.*

Utle, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 13). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

“Jerusalem ... Judea ... Samaria ... the remotest part of the earth”

This is a geographical outline of Acts:

Jerusalem, chapters 1–7

Judea and Samaria, chapters 8–12;

ends of the earth (i.e. Rome), chapters 13–28.

This outline may denote the author’s literary structure and purpose. Christianity is not a sect of Judaism, but a worldwide movement of the one true God fulfilling His OT promises to restore rebellious mankind to fellowship with Himself (cf. Gen. 12:3; Exod. 19:5; Isa. 2:2–4; 56:7; Luke 19:46).

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 13). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Clouds

“a cloud” Clouds were a significant eschatological marker. Clouds were used in three distinct ways in the OT:

(1) to show God’s physical presence, the Shekinah cloud of Glory (cf. Exod. 13:21; 16:10; Num. 11:25)

(2) to cover His Holiness so that man would not see God and die (cf. Exod. 33:20; Ps. 18:9; Isa. 6:5)

(3) to transport Deity (cf. Ps. 104:3; Isa. 19:1). In Daniel 7:13 clouds were used of the transportation of a Divine Messiah.

This prophecy in Daniel is alluded to over 30 times in the NT. This same connection of the Messiah with the clouds of heaven can be seen in Matt. 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Acts 1:9, 11 and 1 Thess. 4:17.

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 13). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Key Women In Jesus' Ministry

There were several women in Jesus' life. *The apostolic group was ministered to both financially and physically by several women (i.e. cooking, washing, etc., cf. v. 41; Matt. 27:55; Luke 8:3).*

Mary The mother of Jesus

“Mary Magdalene” Magdala was a small city on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, three miles north of Tiberias.

Mary followed Jesus from Galilee after He had delivered her from several demons (cf. Luke 8:2). She has unfairly been labeled as a prostitute but there is no NT evidence of this.

“Mary, the mother of James the Less and Joseph” In Matt. 27:56 she is called “the mother of James and Joseph.” In Matt. 28:1 she is called “the other Mary.” The real question is, to whom was she married? In John 19:25 possibly she was married to Clopas, yet her son James, was said to be the “son of Alphaeus” (cf. Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15).

“Salome” This was the mother of James and John, who were part of the inner circle of Jesus' disciples, and the wife of Zebedee (cf. Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40; 16:1–2).

Utey, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 16). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

The Field Of Blood

“this man acquired a field” Verses 18–19 are parenthetical (cf. NASB, NKJV, NRSV, NJB, NIV). The author provided this information for the reader’s understanding. From Matt. 27:6–8 we learn the priests bought this piece of land in fulfillment of OT prophecy (cf. Matt. 27:9). It was Judas’ money, which the priests considered unclean and used to buy a field for burying unclaimed bodies. Verses 18–19 tell us it was the very field in which Judas died. This information about Judas’ death is not repeated elsewhere.

Utle, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 18). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

THE NUMBER TWELVE

Twelve has always been a symbolic number of organization

1. outside the Bible
 - a. twelve signs of the Zodiac
 - b. twelve months of the year
2. in the OT
 - a. the sons of Jacob (the Jewish tribes)
 - b. reflected in
 - (1) twelve pillars of the altar in Exod. 24:4
 - (2) twelve jewels on the high priest's breastplate (which stand for the tribes) in Exod. 28:21
 - (3) twelve loaves of bread in the holy place of the tabernacle in Lev. 24:5
 - (4) twelve spies sent into Canaan in Num. 13 (one from each tribe)
 - (5) twelve rods (tribal standards) at Korah's rebellion in Num. 17:2
 - (6) twelve stones of Joshua in Josh. 4:3, 9, 20
 - (7) twelve administrative districts in Solomon's administration in 1 Kgs. 4:7
 - (8) twelve stones of Elijah's altar to YHWH in 1 Kgs. 18:31

3. in the NT
 - a. twelve apostles chosen
 - b. twelve baskets of bread (one for each Apostle) in Matt. 14:20
 - c. twelve thrones on which NT disciples sit (referring to the 12 tribes of Israel) in Matt. 19:28
 - d. twelve legions of angels to rescue Jesus in Matt. 26:53

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 19). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

e. the symbolism of Revelation

- (1) 24 elders on 24 thrones in 4:4
- (2) 144,000 (12×12) in 7:4; 14:1, 3
- (3) twelve stars on the woman's crown in 12:1
- (4) twelve gates, twelve angels reflecting the twelve tribes in 21:12
- (5) twelve foundation stones of the new Jerusalem and on them the names of the twelve Apostles in 21:14
- (6) twelve thousand stadia in 21:16 (size of new city, New Jerusalem)
- (7) wall is 144 cubits in 21:7
- (8) twelve gates of pearl in 21:21
- (9) trees in new Jerusalem with twelve kinds of fruit (one each month) in 22:2

Utle, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 19). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Chapter 2

The Holy Spirit Descends

- Pentecost 2:1 The fiftieth day after the Sabbath of Passover week (pente koste) is Greek for fiftieth day. Pentecost is the name Greek-speaking Jews used for the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:15-21, Deuteronomy 16:9-12)
- In Jesus time, Pentecost was associated with the renewal of the covenant made with Noah and then with Moses.

Tongues of Fire

2:3

“tongues as of fire distributing themselves”

- The text appears to describe a sound and light event.
- The light-like fire was at first unified, but broke into separate manifestations and gathered on each believer.
- Each person in the Upper Room—Apostles, Jesus’ family members, and disciples—had visible confirmation of their inclusion.
- The church was one!
- “each one of them” There was no distinction made between Apostles or disciples; men or women (cf. Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2:16–21).

Filled With The Spirit

Acts 2:4

- They were “filled”: meaning when people are given an initial endowment of the Spirit to fit them for God’s service. They are also enabled to make important utterances. A person can also receive a “fresh” filling for a specific task.
- In Jesus time, Pentecost was associated with the renewal of the covenant made with Noah and then with Moses.

The Manifestation of the Filling

- Literally it is “other tongues” (heterais glōssais). The translation “different languages” reflects the understanding of this term based on the context of vv. 6 and 11.
- “Tongues” in Acts was always a sign to believers that the gospel had overcome another ethnic, geographical barrier. There is a distinctive difference between the tongues of Acts and Paul’s later ministry in Corinth (cf. 1 Cor. 12–14).

Utey, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 24). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Devout Jews

- “from every nation under heaven” All male Jews were strongly urged to attend the three major annual feast days (cf. Lev. 23) at the Temple (cf. Deut. 16:16).
- There were (1) probably pilgrims from all over the Mediterranean area who had come to Jerusalem for Passover and stayed until Pentecost or
- (2) permanent residents who had moved from somewhere outside of Jerusalem (cf. use of the word in 4:16; 7:24; 9:22, 32).

Uttley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 24). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Each Speaking In the Tongue of the Hearers

- “hearing them speaking in his own language” *This may have been a miracle of hearing, not speaking (cf. vv. 8 and 11). If this many people, all speaking a different language, spoke at the same time it would be confusion. This is the theological reversal of The Tower of Babel (cf. Gen. 11).*
- This is the Greek term *dialektos* (cf. v. 8), from which we get the English term “*dialect*.” Luke uses this term often in Acts (cf. 1:19; 2:6, 8; 21:40; 22:2; 26:14). It is used in the sense of “*language*.” However, in this context, *dialect* may be the intended meaning. These Jews heard about Jesus in their mother dialect. This was meant to be a confirming sign to them of the truthfulness of the new message about God.

Uttley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 25). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

The People Groups

- Parthians Medes Elamites
residents of Mesopotamia
- Judea
- Cappadocia Pontus Asia Phrygia
- Pamphylia” These were groups from modern Turkey.
- Egypt the district of Libya around Cyrene these were groups from North Africa.
- Rome
- proselytes” This refers to Gentile converts to Judaism
- Cretans” This was a large island in the Mediterranean close to Turkey
- Arabs” This would refer to the descendants of Esau

Peters First Sermon

- These men are not drunk
- This is just the third hour
- This is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel”
This is a quote from Joel 2:28–32
- In the last days (In the OT this phrase referred to the end of time and the coming of the Messianic Age)
- I will pour forth My Spirit on all mankind
- YHWH is sharing His Spirit with all humans made in His image (literally, “all flesh”), which is asserted in Gen. 1:26–27.
- Sons and your daughters shall prophesy (Note that there is no gender distinction)

Utley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, p. 29). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Sermon Continued

- • Jesus death was in Gods plan (foreknowledge)
- God raised Hum up
- The NT affirms that all three persons of the Trinity were active in Jesus' resurrection:
 - (1) the Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:11)
 - (2) the Son (cf. John 2:19–22; 10:17–18)
 - (3) the Father (cf. Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15, 26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 34, 37; 17:31; Rom. 6:4, 9)
- “For David says of Him” This is a quote from Psalm 16:8–11. Peter is asserting that Ps. 16 is Messianic (cf. Paul in 13:36) and that it refers directly to Jesus. Jesus' resurrection is the Psalmists hope and the NT believer's hope

Sermon Continued

“ ‘God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne’ ” This is a summary or composite reference to 2 Sam. 7:11–16; Psalm 89:3–4; or 132:11. This shows that God’s ancient intent is to be fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His death and resurrection were not plan B, but God’s pre-determined, pre-creation plan of redemption (cf. Eph. 2:11–3:13).

Utlely, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, pp. 3839). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Sermon Continued

“Lord and Christ” The term “lord” (kurios) can be used in a general sense or in a specific theological sense. It can mean “mister,” “sir,” “master,” “owner,” “husband,” or “the full God-man.” The OT usage of this term (adon) came from the Jews’ reluctance to pronounce the covenant name for God, YHWH. (cf. Exod. 3:14). They were afraid of breaking the commandment which said, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain” (cf. Ex. 20:7, Deut. 5:11). They thought if they did not pronounce it, they could not take it in vain. So, they substituted the Hebrew word adonai, which had a similar meaning to the Greek word, Kurios (Lord). The NT authors used this term to describe the full Deity of Christ. The phrase “Jesus is Lord” was the public confession of faith and baptismal formula of the early church (cf. Rom. 10:9–13; 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:11).

Uttley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, pp. 3839). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Sermon Continued

“ “Repent” The Hebrew term for repentance meant a change of action. The Greek term meant a change of mind. Repentance is a willingness to change. It does not mean a total cessation of sin, but a desire to please God, not self. As fallen humanity we live for ourselves, but as believers we live for God! Repentance and faith are God’s requirements for salvation (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16, 19; 20:21). Jesus said “Unless you repent, you will all perish” (cf Luke. 13:3, 5). Repentance is God’s will for fallen man (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9, Ezek. 18:23, 30, 32).

Sermon Continued

“ ‘The mystery of the sovereignty of God and human free will can be clearly demonstrated by repentance as a requirement for salvation. However, the paradox or dialectic pair is that it is also a gift of God (cf. 5:31; 11:18 and 2 Tim. 2:25). There is always a tension in the biblical presentation of God’s initiating grace and humanity’s needed covenantal response. The new covenant like the old covenant has an “if-then” structure. There are several terms used in the NT which relate to the concept of repentance.

Utle, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, pp. 3839). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.

Sermon Continued

“ “receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” The gift of the Spirit was (1) an assured salvation; (2) an indwelling presence; (3) an equipping for service; and (4) a developing Christlikeness. We must not push the items or the order of the events of salvation because they are often different in Acts. Acts was not meant to teach a standard formula or theological sequence (cf. *How To Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, pp. 94–112), but record what happened.

Uteley, R. J. (2003). Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts (Vol. Volume 3B, pp. 3839). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.