

The Challenges of Preaching Acts

Acts is a unique book in our New Testament. It fills in the story from Jesus' ascension to the imprisonment of Paul. It offers many compelling sermon summaries, as well as some genuinely unique historical accounts. How are we to preach summaries of sermons to other people at a very different time? How are we to preach events that were not recorded to build our anticipation of a repeat? Some will avoid preaching Acts, but this is not the solution. So how can we effectively preach Acts in our contexts?

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I. Why Should We Preach Acts?

- A. The beginning of the story we continue
- B. The focus of our story
- C. Examples of tone, urgency, impact, etc.
- D. Other

II. Normativity – A challenge for all of us

- A. Acts is not “mere history”
 - 1. Acts is inspired theological Scripture
 - 2. Acts is as theological as the epistles
- B. Acts is not “all history” – i.e. not everything is an ongoing concern...

NB. Different denominational backgrounds will have differences on issues of whether certain events in Acts are to be considered descriptive or normative for life in the church today. We do not intend to get into discussions here that could threaten our unity. Please be sensitive to one another as we wrestle with preaching Acts in our own contexts.

1. Should we be concerned that the apostles have died?
2. Should we be looking for qualified replacements?
3. Some sing that “we need another Pentecost” – but all agree that the Holy Spirit is critical to the existence and witness of the church today.
4. Should church discipline involve sudden deaths like Ananias & Sapphira?
5. Etc.

C. Acts is “all applicable”

III. Occasional, Geographical & Cultural Distance

A. There is no generic exposition, only speeches relevant to a specific occasion

B. The Geography of Acts is significant

C. The varied cultures in Acts are significant

1. Jewish
2. Greek
3. Roman
4. Pagan

IV. Preaching Acts Today

A. Comparing the contexts

B. Evaluating our need

C. Effectively preaching Acts today