

Learning the Ministry Lessons after Acts

The church did not jump from the end of the 1st century to the start of the 21st century. There is much that we as preachers need to learn from church history, but it would be naïve to think that “getting back to the early church” would solve all our issues. What happened to the church after Acts? What must we learn from that as we preach God’s Word in 21st Century Europe?

Michael Reeves is President and Professor of Theology at Union School of Theology in Oxford, England. Previously he has been Head of Theology for UCCF and an associate minister at All Souls Church, Langham Place, London. He is the author of *Introducing Major Theologians*, *Why the Reformation Still Matters*, *The Unquenchable Flame*, *The Good God*, and *Christ our Life*, co-editor of *Adam, the Fall and Original Sin*, and holds a doctorate in systematic theology from King’s College, London. He is married to Bethan, and together they have two daughters, Lucy and Mia.

I. The century after the New Testament

A. Persecution

B. False teaching

II. Athanasius: who is God?

A. Finding the correct starting-point

III. Augustine: what does it mean to be human?

A. Augustine's *Confessions*

Great are you, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is your power, and of your wisdom there is no end. Man, being a part of your creation, longs to praise you. He carries his mortality with him, the sign of his sin, the proof that you thwart the proud. Yet man, as part of your creation, still longs to praise you. You arouse us to delight in praising you, for you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you.¹

B. Augustine vs Pelagius

Suggested Readings:

Michael Reeves, *Introducing Major Theologians* (Nottingham: IVP, 2015)

See the many resources available at www.uniontheology.org/resources/historical

¹ *Confessions* 1.1.1, my translation.