Acts: A Time Line of the NT Church

The Outline & Structure of Acts:

Acts 1:8 (ESV)
But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses ... (Acts 1:2)

in Jerusalem (Acts 3-6)

and in all Judea and Samaria, (Acts 6-12)

Summaries Acts 9:31; 12:24
and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 13-28)

Summaries: Acts 16:5; 19:20, 28:30-31

Luke gives reliable narrative history selected and arranged for theological purposes. He focuses on Peter (1-12), then on Paul (ch 13-14).

Themes in Acts

The Holy Spirit at work God’s Sovereignty The Church Prayer and Witness Salvation Persecution and Suffering Gospel to the Gentiles

Early Church in Jerusalem (Acts 2-8:3)

30 A.D. Jesus’ Ascension & Pentecost Beginnings of the church Ministry and growth Boldness, Arrests and deliverance

Persecution and Expansion (Acts 8:4-12:25)
Martyrdom of Stephen — Saul rages Philip in Samaria Holy Spirit falls on Samaritans 8:14ff ca. 33–36 A.D. Conversion of Paul Paul in Cilicia & Syria

Caligula Emperor of Rome 37–41 A.D.

39 A.D. Herod Antipas exiled to Gaul


Claudius Emperor of Rome 41–54 A.D.

44 A.D. Martyrdom of James; Death of Herod Agrippa

46 A.D. Paul’s Second Jerusalem Visit


47–48 A.D. Paul & Barnabas in Cyprus, John Mark’s desertion (13:13)
Paul and Barnabas in Asia: Pisidia, Iconium, and Lystra

49 A.D. Paul writes Galatians (?) Paul and Barnabas sent to Jerusalem.
Titus, a Gentile, taken along

Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:1–35)

49 A.D. Jews Expelled from Rome Aquila and Priscilla move to Corinth

Major Speeches in Acts:

Peter at Pentacoast: 2:14–41
Peter at Solomon’s Portico 3:11–26
Stephen’s speech 7:2–53
Peter Cornelius 10:34–43; 11:4–18
Paul in Antioch 13:16–47
Paul in Athens 17:22–32
Paul to Ephesian elders 20:17–35
Paul in Jerusalem 22:1–21
Paul before Felix 24:10–21
Paul before Agrippa 26:1–31


Paul and Barnabas split over Mark’s desertion

49–50 A.D. Paul & Silas travel from Syrian Antioch through Asia Minor to Macedonia & Achaia
Paul joined by Timothy at Derbe The Macedonian Call, Paul joined by Luke at Troas.

Paul at Philippi (Luke remained there), then to Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus.

50 A.D. Paul’s writes Thessalonians

50–52 A.D. Paul in Corinth
Gallo proconsul of Achaia (51–52 A.D.) Felix procurator of Judea (52–50 A.D.)
Paul’s Third Jerusalem Visit (April–Summer)

Gospel of Mark written ca 50–65 possibly in Rome. John Mark worked with both Peter and Paul in their ministries.

Five summaries of the Growing Church:
3rd Missionary Journey

52–55 A.D. Paul Returns to Ephesus

54 A.D. Nero Emperor of Rome (54–68 AD)

Apollos’s ministry in Ephesus and Corinth

55–57 A.D. Paul in Macedonia, Illyricum & Achaia

Paul’s Letters to Corinthians (55–56 AD)

Paul’s Voyage to Rome
60 A.D. February (Acts 27 –28)

60–62 A.D. Paul under house arrest in Rome

62 A.D. Death of Festus; Albinus procurator of Judea


Acts ends with Paul preaching “without hindrance” in Rome

55 57 A.D 57 A.D 57 A.D 57 A.D. Paul in Macedonia, Illyricum & Achaia

Paul returns to Ephesus

54 A.D. Nero Emperor of Rome (54–68 AD)

Apollos’s ministry in Ephesus and Corinth

55–57 A.D. Paul in Macedonia, Illyricum & Achaia

Paul’s Letters to Corinthians (55–56 AD)

Paul’s Fourth & Last Jerusalem Visit

57 A.D. Festus succeeds Felix as procurator of Judea


Gospel of Luke: Possibly written at this time

59 A.D. September

Nero murders his mother Agrippina


After Acts: Paul and Peter

Gospel of Matthew written ca. 63–66?

63–65 or 66 A.D. Paul released from prison? Paul visits Spain?

64 A.D. July fire of Rome Christians blamed

60-65 A.D.: John writes 1, 2, and 3 John.

63-66 A.D.: Paul writes 1 Timothy and Titus from Macedonia.

64 A.D.: Peter writes 1 Peter.

64-68 A.D.: Peter writes 2 Peter.

65 or 66 A.D. The apostle Paul writes 2 Timothy while imprisoned in Rome.

Peter and Paul are believed to have been martyred in late 67 or early 68 A.D.

Interpreting Acts

• Look for what Luke intended to communicate to his readers

• Look for positive and negative examples in the characters of the story

• Read individual passages in the light of the overall story of Acts and the rest of the New Testament

• Look to other parts of Acts to clarify what is normative or merely descriptive

• Look for repeated patterns and themes

After Acts: John

66 A.D. Jewish War Begins

68 A.D. Death of Nero (June) Galba emperor (68-69 A.D.)


70 A.D. Fall of Jerusalem

67-80 A.D.: Jude writes his letter.

85-95 A.D.: The Gospel of John

95-96 A.D.: The apostle John writes the book of Revelation while in exile on the island of Patmos.