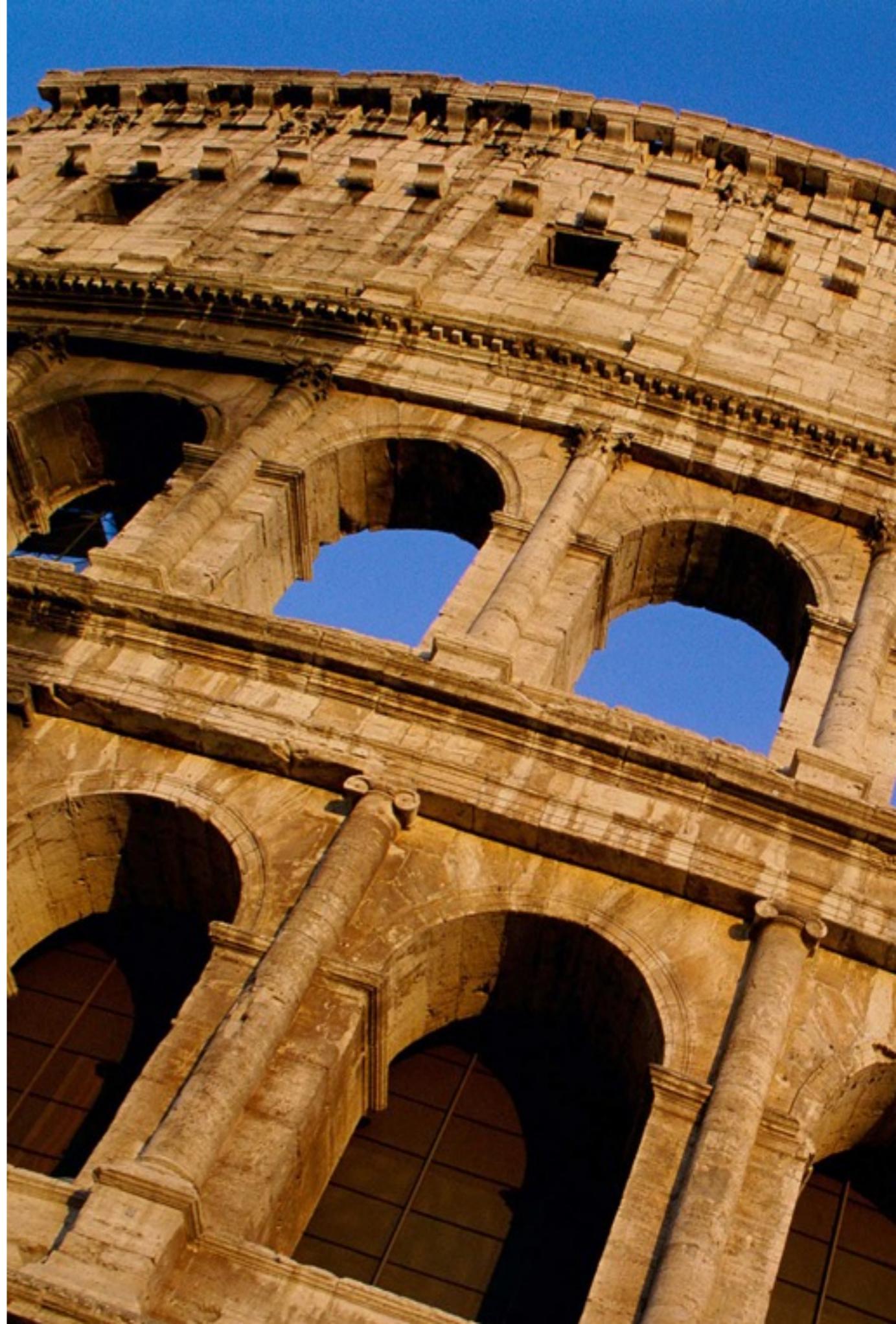


The Church of the New Testament: The Book of Acts

a.k.a. The Acts of Peter and Paul
a.k.a. The Acts of the Holy Spirit



Background: Who, What, When, Where, Why?

- The title is reminiscent of histories of Hellenistic figures
- Misleading title?
- Luke pt. 2. Possible companion of Paul, or a historian with the companion's writings, filling in and summarizing the rest
- Romanticized, but not unhistorical (see DSS; names, places, titles)
- Purpose: to show the historical connection between Israel and Jesus; and between Jesus and the Church
- Jews rejecting + Gentiles embracing = a new Israel
- Acts 2.0. (shortened version for me and for Luke?)

Act I: Peter

- 40 days; “Why are you gazing up? He’ll be back”
- Ps: “May another take his place” > Matthias (lots!)
- Pentecost: Drunk? No! Throwing some David. Jesus was the one; you killed him! :- (What do we do?
- Repent and be baptized! Kerygma: This was God’s plan; connecting Jewish history to them. Thousands saved daily.
- Communal life / Some Assembly Required!
- Church infancy - miraculous momentum: Peter & Paul. Portico of the Temple. Even shadows and handkerchiefs! (but “greater works” than JC’s to manifest JC, not P&P)

- Jewish leaders persecuted Jesus, now his followers
- Healing the cripple: Sanhedrin “by what power?” Forbiddance to P&P to speak of Jesus (yeah, no. Obey God or man?)
- “Blessed” were they! :-)
- Practical issue: Greek speaking widows receiving less than Hebrew speaking widows -> appoint deacons
- Stephen. Outspoken. Sanhedrin arrests, Stephen witnesses to the end. “Forgive them...” “Into your hands...”
- One Jewish leader approved of the killing: Saul.
- Saul was a Jew / Pharisee / Roman citizen! The perfect persecutor.
- WWJD...

Act 2: Paul

- Blinded by the light! Why do you persecute *me*?
- Yeah, right. -> Jews now set their sights on killing him!
- 2 unexpected events: (1) non-apostolic Church in Samaria (Philip)!; (2) Centurion wants to be baptized! What to do?
- Peter & John lay hands on Philip - “koinonia”; circumcised Jews see uncircumcised Jews speaking in tongues; Peter sees God shows no partiality - baptizes Cornelius! (Say it again!)
- Herod imprisons Peter; Peter kerygmatises; miraculously freed; sign to take the good news to the Gentiles
- Apostle to the Gentiles (not Peter)

- Paul sees Jews convicting themselves as not worthy of the Gospel (unlike Rom)
- Apostles give Paul Barnabas to accompany him
- Kicked out and loving it!
- 3rd unforeseen event: dissension over circumcision.
- First real council. Peter: seen it - why should we impose? Paul/Barnabas: concur. James: fine, but...
- “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...”
- 3 journeys of Paul: establishing churches; writing letters:
- JC = Son of David for the Jews; Unknown God for the Graeco-Romans
- inspiring (boring?) sermons and the bulk of NT

Act now

- Purpose not to evangelize (been there done that) but to show the Gospel go from Jerusalem to (Antioch) to Rome and to the ends of the world
- The Mystical Body now had the Holy Spirit animating it
- Identity “early baptism in the name of Jesus only” / Organization (deacons before priests) / Transitions (ecumenism, women, gay marriage, etc) Mind of Christ?
- WWJD? (What would Jesus even *know* concerning the Jewish to Gentile takeover?)
- HS breathes where He pleases
- Salvation Outside the Church? (Remember the rock!) Can know where it is even without knowing where it's not.

We are One Body

We are one body, one body in Christ

And we do not stand alone!

We are one body, one body in Christ

And he came that we might have life!

On the rock of Peter, see my Church I build

Come receive my spirit, with my gifts be filled

For you are my body, you're my hands and feet

Speak my word of life to everyone you meet