The Book of Acts was written by Luke and was written sometime around 60 AD, almost certainly before the mid 60s (when songs like *Wild Thing, Hey Jude and Sugar Sugar* were groovy!) **HA,** not those 60s but the *original* 60s…now let me tell you why. Luke never comes out and says, “*I wrote this Book and my name is Luke.”* But, we have **certain clues** and **solid historical facts** by which we can confidently conclude his authorship.

First, Luke is uniformly identified as the author of Acts by several early historical figures of which the last of these sources passed away prior to the end of the second century. *Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Turtullian, Origen, Eusebius and Jerome*…all identify Luke as the author of this book. In addition, the author greets a man named, *“Theophilus”* in verse 1 while Luke greets a *Theophilus* as well in Luke Chapter 1 verse 3.

The first part of Acts concentrates primarily on Peter while the second *half* (if you will) concentrates solely on Paul. Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:11, *“Only Luke is with me,”* and the Book of Acts would seem to support that the author is *with* Paul as there is movement in the narrative from the *third person* to the *first person* *plural* beginning in Chapter 16…, *“We”* begins to be the pronoun of choice. The beginning of the Book of Acts flows almost perfectly from where Luke left off in his Gospel and the writing style is also quite unique and yet quite the same in these two books. For these reasons, most agree (as do I) that Luke is indeed the author of this Book.

Now interesting…***Luke is a bit detailed.*** We know from Colossians 4:14 that Luke is the *beloved physician* so he is no doubt extremely smart…and the amount that he writes is kinda amazing when you set it apart. Believe it or not ***Mr. Ripley***…he is actually the most prolific author of the New Testament. The Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts comprise 28% of the entire New Testament…more than the writings of John and more than the epistles of Paul…*girl, that’s amazing!* I didn’t know that!

The Book was written sometime around or perhaps just before 60 to 64 AD. Why and how do we know this? Luke is the *detail king* and yet the Book of Acts ends **rather abruptly** with Paul in Rome. **No mention** of Paul’s death which was between 64 and 68 AD, **no mention** of the persecution of Christians that broke out under Nero around 64 AD and certainly **not a peep** about the destruction of Israel in 70AD and so it’s fairly obvious and uncomplicated to accurately date the book sometime before 64AD.

***The Book of Acts!*** Why was it written? And to whom? The traditional name for this Book is the Book of the *Acts of the Apostles.* **Perhaps more accurately** it should be called *“A Few Acts of a Few of the Apostles.”* But **most accurately** it should be thought of as

, *“The Acts of the Risen Jesus,”* or *“The Acts of the Holy Spirit.”*

What would be the use of writing this book if the Holy Spirit wasn’t working in the early church? **The Acts would be boring**…, *“Then Peter went to Sonic with John…then James and Andrew argued over who had the better fries, McMatzah’s or Babka King,”* **HA!** They’d be ***mundane and ordinary and powerless***…But the things we see in this book…even in context of ***our*** everyday lives…certainly in context to the Apostles’ everyday life…***NEW, crazy exciting, powerful, different, unusual, original, raw and fresh!***

**Just like the church should be today.** I’m convinced, *rather sadly*, that there are many churches out there that if the Holy Spirit stopped working within and amongst them, stopped leading and guiding and filling…, **they wouldn’t even notice.** Nothing would really change. A.W. Tozer said, *“If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95% of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95% of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference!”*

Is that us? Is that you? Can you look at your life and see proof of God at work through the *power, leading and indwelling* of the Holy Spirit? Is it OBVI!? I pray it is, man! Lest you be in danger of ***the NOTHING!*** HA! (Never Ending Storyyyyyyyy!)

Jesus said, “*Apart from Me, you’re* ***accomplishing nothing****…****gaining nothing****…no progress no value…Apart from Me you can do nothing!* (John Chapter 15) And yet through Him, the Holy Spirit *ruling, reigning, cultivating and disciplining* your heart and life…Jesus said to His peeps, *“You marvel at what you see today, greater works even you will do because I go to the Father!”* (John 14) The Book of Acts puts that truth on display and to whom is it written?

**To you!** You are *Theophilus!* The name literally means, *“Lover of God!”* It is written to the church, to the believer, to the ***restored Peter***, to the ***heart broken John***, to the ***lost and raging Paul***…all looking for the truth. **It is written to you!** Acts…as we enter this book, I believe God would have us ***reset again to a new and fresh work that He wants to do in us individually***…man I thrive off of ONLY that! Put the ***axe*** to the root and allow Him to build again and anew! And I believe He wants us, me, this church to ***freshen up a bit***…***Axe*** Body Spray! **HA!** Allowing this Book and these scenes…to ***sweeten up the scent of your soul*** as it were as you return to the simplicity of the church being ***simply saved sinners filled with the power of the Holy Spirit!!!***

Acts Chapter 1 Verses 1 – 3

* I **love** the word the physician uses here…***infallible!*** The cool, unique word, *tekmerion* – sounds to me like *“take me on!”* And this is the only place in the Bible that this word is used *(Luke does that a lot)!* For forty days, Jesus resurrected - hung out on earth. Seen by the apostles, His family, His friends and even 500 people at one time. Infallible proof! Was it Him? Yes. *Without a doubt!*  Was He who was dead now alive again? Yes. *Without a doubt!* Were His wounds real? Yes. *Without a doubt!* Was He filled with power and somehow ***wonderfully*** the very **presence of the Kingdom of God?** Yes. *Without a doubt!* Was His sacrifice for the sins of the world sufficient and complete? Infallibly, yes! *Without* ***any*** *doubt!*

Acts Chapter 1 Verse 4

* What is the *Promise of the Father?* Notice verse 5…

Acts Chapter 1 Verse 5

* First, let’s handle the **doctrine.** There is a ***glaring undeniable truth*** that the Bible speaks of two baptisms. One by *water* and one by the *Spirit*. One is physical and one is spiritual. And this baptism is an ***immersing***…a pouring upon as Joel Chapter 2 speaks of as the Spirit of God is not only *with* you, not only *in* you, but also *upon* you…and we will tackle that in just a minute.
* Second, there is One God, eternally and mysteriously existing in three Persons. Jesus says here, the **Son** speaking, *“Wait for the promise of the* ***Father****,”* and that promise is the baptism of the **Holy Spirit.** I never want to miss the opportunity to show you the *repetitious and obvious* presence of the doctrine of the Trinity in scripture…

Acts Chapter 1 Verses 6 - 7

* If you look at the word *restore* in the Greek, they weren’t asking for a restore in terms of *salvation from sin* but rather a **restoration of Israel nationally and politically.** And I love Jesus’ response…, *“It is not for you to know.”* You know there are things like that…things that are simply not for us to know and man that ***trips*** so many people up…especially reluctant seekers of truth. Those reluctant to go about anything by faith because they are somehow demanding to figure it all out.
* ***When did we ever decide that we have to know everything?!*** I mean just that statement is ridiculous! There is so much we don’t know and we are just fine with it and go about our day and business but when it comes to God…*oh man I better understand and get it all or I won’t believe in God*…***come on man***…you’re human, I’m human, God is not…some things just aren’t for you to know.
* He couldn’t tell Peter that it’s going to be a couple thousand years…***there are billions of souls to reach first***…You’re going to be hated on this earth and killed torturously by being crucified…its better for him to not know…**just go**…I’ll be with you…I’ll make you power…and here is the practical fulfillment of the Promise of the Father…

Acts Chapter 1 Verse 8

* They already had received the Holy Spirit. John Chapter 20, Jesus came to them and *breathed* on them and said to them, *“Receive the Holy Spirit.”* And yet they **hid**…and yet they **wasted time** fishing…and yet they ***waited***…God reveals the third ministry of the Holy Spirit and that is full immersion!! You shall receive POWER…power to what…be a witness of the *real* Jesus…
* I heard a perfect quote this week, *“The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for the purpose of cleansing from sin, but for the purpose of empowering for service!”* I like that…but before we move forward in power and dynamic, mighty, fresh and eternal acts, before you go forward ***personally***, you must first be ***removed from the grip, power and penalty of sin***…the cloud of darkness that covers the eyes of the lost…
* And I believe those here that are saved, that have grown dull or hard or even secretly calloused, you need a fresh falling, a fresh indwelling, a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit…lest your walk sink further into mundane lifelessness…Allow that new work in your heart as we build into this new book…