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Next Weeks Lesson: "The Number of the Disciples Was Multiplied" ([Acts 6–9](#))

Today's Lesson: "We Are Witnesses" ([Acts 1-5](#))

The book of Acts is Luke's account of important events in the Church during the 30 years or so following Jesus Christ's mortal life. Luke tells of the resurrected Lord's 40-day ministry and his Ascension. He then describes the great spiritual outpouring on the day of Pentecost, Peter's leadership of the Church, the Apostles' early missionary efforts, and Paul's dramatic conversion. The second half of the book focuses on Paul's missionary labors among the Gentiles.

1. The Lord ascends into heaven – Matthias is called to be an Apostle. ([Acts 1](#))



After Jesus was resurrected, he stayed with his disciples for 40 days, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" ([Acts 1:3](#)).

A. Just before he returned to his Father in Heaven, what did he promise his Apostles they would soon receive? ([Acts 1:4–5](#); [Luke 24:49](#))

B. What did Jesus tell the Apostles they were to do after they received the gift of the Holy Ghost? ([Acts 1:8](#)) How does this instruction compare with the responsibility given to Apostles today? ([D&C 107:23, 35](#)) How did the Apostles fulfill this responsibility in the time just after Jesus' Resurrection? How are the Apostles fulfilling this responsibility today?

C. How did the gift of the Holy Ghost help the Apostles in their responsibility to be witnesses of Jesus Christ?

([John 15:26–27](#); [1 Corinthians 12:3](#))

D. What is the role of the Holy Ghost in our efforts to teach the gospel? ([2 Nephi 33:1](#); [D&C 42:14](#)) As the Apostles watched Jesus ascend into heaven, two men in white stood nearby. What did these men tell the Apostles? ([Acts 1:10–11](#))

- E. After the Lord's Ascension, a new Apostle was chosen to fill the vacancy in the Quorum left by Judas. How was Matthias chosen as the new Apostle? ([Acts 1:21–26](#)) How are Apostles and other Church leaders chosen today? ([Articles of Faith 1:5](#))

2. On the day of Pentecost, the Apostles are filled with the Holy Ghost. ([Acts 2](#))

The Feast of Pentecost was a harvest celebration held 50 days after the Feast of the Passover. Jews from many nations came to Jerusalem for this feast. ([Bible Dictionary, "Feasts," 673](#))

- A. What significant event occurred on the day of Pentecost, one week after the Savior's Ascension? ([Acts 2:1–4](#), [John 14:26](#), [15:26](#), [16:7–14](#) and in [Acts 1:5](#))
- B. What did the Apostles do when they received the Holy Ghost? ([Acts 2:4](#)) How did the people react when they heard the Apostles speaking in various languages? ([Acts 2:5–13](#)) How is the preaching of the gospel today similar to the preaching on the day of Pentecost? ([D&C 90:11](#); [100:5–8](#))
- C. How did Peter respond to those who mocked the Apostles for speaking in tongues? ([Acts 2:14–24, 36](#)) What impresses you about Peter's response? How did Peter's testimony affect those who heard it? ([Acts 2:37](#)) What did Peter teach the people who believed his testimony? ([Acts 2:38](#)) Compare [Acts 2:38](#) to the [fourth article of faith](#) and [3 Nephi 27:19–20](#).
- D. About 3,000 people believed Peter's words and were baptized. How did these people demonstrate that they had been converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ? ([Acts 2:41–47](#)) What can we learn from their example?

3. Peter and John heal a lame man by the power of Jesus Christ. ([Acts 3:1–11](#))

- A. Even though Peter and John had no money to give to the lame man at the gate of the temple, what did they have to offer him? By what power was the man made whole? ([Acts 3:6, 12–13, 16](#); [4:10](#)) How have you felt the healing power of Jesus Christ in your life?
- B. Peter used this miracle as an opportunity to testify of Jesus Christ ([Acts 3:12–26](#); [4:5–12](#)). What opportunities do we have to testify of Christ? How have you been blessed as you have been a witness (or have heard others be witnesses) of Jesus Christ?
- C. How did the priests and Sadducees respond to Peter's sermon? ([Acts 4:1–3](#)) How did the multitude respond to the sermon? ([Acts 4:4](#)) Why do you think these two groups responded so differently to the same sermon? What does our response to the words of Church leaders reveal about the condition of our hearts?
- D. With the healed man standing by, the priests and Sadducees could not deny that a miracle had occurred ([Acts 4:13–14, 16](#)). Since they had no reason to imprison Peter and John, what did they do instead? ([Acts 4:15–18](#)). The Jewish religious leaders had hoped that Jesus and his teachings would be forgotten after the Crucifixion. When the Apostles continued to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Jewish leaders tried to stop them.)

- E. How did Peter and John respond to the priests' and Sadducees' demand that they stop teaching the gospel? ([Acts 4:19–20](#)) What are some circumstances in your life that might require similar courage in being a witness for Jesus Christ?
- F. After Peter and John were released, they returned to the members of the Church and prayed with them ([Acts 4:23–30](#)). What did they ask for in the prayer? ([Acts 4:29–30](#)) What happened as a result of this prayer and the Apostles' subsequent actions? ([Acts 4:31–35](#); [5:12–16](#))

4. The Apostles continue to preach and heal with great power. ([Acts 5:12–42](#))

- A. When the Apostles continued to preach and work miracles, the priests and Sadducees cast them into prison ([Acts 5:17–18](#)). How were they released from prison? ([Acts 5:19–20](#)) What did they do after they were released? ([Acts 5:21, 25](#)) Why did the Apostles continue to preach the gospel even after being imprisoned? ([Acts 5:29–32](#))
- B. What counsel did Gamaliel give to the Jewish leaders who wanted to kill the Apostles? ([Acts 5:33–39](#)) What experiences have shown you the truth of Gamaliel's words?
- C. What change did the gift of the Holy Ghost bring about in the Apostles? (Compare [Matthew 26:47–56, 69–75](#) with [Acts 4:5–21](#); [5:17–18, 26–42](#)) How can the Apostles' examples inspire us to be witnesses of the truth?

After the Apostles received the gift of the Holy Ghost, they became powerful witnesses of Jesus Christ. While Apostles have a special calling to be witnesses of Christ, each member of the Church also has the responsibility to bear witness of him. The Holy Ghost can help us know when and how to testify of Christ. As we follow the Spirit's promptings, our faith will increase, our sensitivity to the Spirit will grow, and we will become more effective witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Manifestation of the Holy Ghost at the Kirtland Temple dedication.

An outpouring of the Spirit similar to the one in [Acts 2:1–4](#) occurred at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple on 27 March 1836.

In [Doctrine and Covenants 109:36–37](#), there is a part of the dedicatory prayer in which the Prophet Joseph Smith requested such an outpouring. The following statement describes how that request was granted:

"The Prophet Joseph Smith said that at an evening meeting on the day the Kirtland Temple was dedicated, "Brother George A. Smith arose and began to prophesy, when a noise was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the Temple, and all the congregation simultaneously arose, being moved upon by an invisible power; many began to speak in tongues and prophesy; others saw glorious visions; and I beheld the Temple was filled with angels, which fact I declared to the congregation. The people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an

unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place” (*History of the Church*, 2:428).

6. “The times of restitution of all things” ([Acts 3:20–21](#))

A. What did Peter foresee when he prophesied of a “restitution of all things”?

7. “They had all things in common” ([Acts 4:32–5:11](#))

Members of the early Church “had all things common” ([Acts 2:44](#); [Acts 4:32, 34–37](#)). They consecrated all they had so that everyone’s needs were met.

A. How did Barnabas respond to this system of consecrating possessions? ([Acts 4:36–37](#)) How did Ananias and Sapphira violate this system? ([Acts 5:1–2](#)) What did Peter tell Ananias and Sapphira about their actions? ([Acts 5:3–4, 8–9](#)) How can we ensure that we are honest with God?

B. Although we do not live under a formal system of consecration, what are we asked to give to God or share with other people? ([Omni 1:26](#); [Mosiah 4:16](#); [D&C 4:2; 119:4](#)) How might we sometimes “keep back part”?

Elder Neal A. Maxwell commented:

“Ananias and Sapphira . . . ‘kept back’ a portion instead of consecrating their all ([Acts 5:1–11](#)). Some would never *sell* Jesus for thirty pieces, but they would not *give* Him their all either!

“ . . . We tend to think of consecration only in terms of property and money. But there are so many ways of keeping back part. One might be giving of money and time and yet hold back a significant portion of himself. One might share talents publicly yet privately retain a particular pride. One might hold back from kneeling before God’s throne and yet bow to a particular gallery of peers. One might accept a Church calling but have his heart more set on maintaining a certain role in the world” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 90; or [Ensign, Nov. 1992, 66](#)).

C. How can we overcome the tendency to “keep back part”? What blessings can come from giving our all to the Lord?