



What Is the New Testament All About?

(Acts – The Revelation)

“But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere – in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8, NLT)

Like striking a match and starting a wildfire, the Holy Spirit came and indwelt believers. The church was born. The spiritual flame began in Jerusalem with a small group of disciples, spread to Judea, Samaria and to most of the known Roman world. When the leaders of the Jews rejected the Gospel, they went to the non-Jews (Gentiles). Filled with the Spirit, they preached, loved, healed and taught wherever God sent them. Catch their excitement! See lives changed and churches begun. Nothing could stop them! They had discovered Jesus and wanted the world to know him. Do you feel that way?

The Book of Acts

After careful research, Dr. Luke wrote a history of the early church, a sequel to the gospel of Luke. Often a traveling companion of the Apostle Paul, he knew many of the stories firsthand. Some call this book the “Acts of the Holy Spirit” or “Acts of the Apostles.” The book answers many questions about the church. How did God begin his church? What actions did they take when problems arose? How did God reveal they should share the Good News with the Gentiles? What did the believers do when persecuted? How did Paul become the greatest missionary?

The second half of Acts focuses on Paul’s missionary journeys. If you love adventure stories, Luke wrote some of the greatest. Be sure and read the shipwreck story in Acts 27:13 - 28:1-14. Note how the Holy Spirit guided Paul and his companions and protected them even when persecuted. Paul never missed an opportunity to tell people about Jesus. Are you watching for opportunities to share your faith?

The Letters of Paul

These letters appear from the longest (Romans) to the shortest (Philemon). The names are the nine churches and four individuals to whom Paul wrote. As Paul helped to establish churches, he wanted to be sure that they would grow. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he wrote letters to encourage them, to help them deal with their problems and to teach them how to live as Christians. Although Paul had never met some of the people he wrote (for example, the Romans), he felt a bond with them and loved them as brothers

and sisters. He wrote some letters because of problems in the church, such as false teaching (Galatians) and sin (Corinthians). As you study these letters, you will come to a much deeper understanding about who you are in Christ, what he has done for you and how you are to live.

Hebrews and the General Letters

No one is sure who wrote Hebrews (maybe Paul). The General Letters were written to many churches and are named after the men who wrote them – James, Peter, John and Jude. James and Jude were half-brothers of Jesus. Peter and John were apostles. Hebrews strengthens the faith of those who may doubt who Jesus is. Paul talks about faith in his letters, but James reminds you that works demonstrate faith. Peter's letters give hope to those being persecuted. John explains the love of Christ. Jude says we must be prepared to defend our faith. The letters of Paul and the General Letters teach us how to live out the Christian life by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Book of Revelation

This book is a book of hope and warning. While exiled on the Isle of Patmos for preaching about Jesus, the Apostle John experiences a startling vision of the risen Christ. Jesus identifies himself by saying; *“I am the living one who died. Look, I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.”* (Revelation 1:18, NLT) He is the “Lamb of God” who is, who always was and who is still to come. He instructs John to write down what he sees and hears. The first messages are for the seven churches of Asia, telling them how they please and displease him.

Then startling, dramatic and majestic images come before John's eyes. These visions portray the future rise of evil, culminating in the coming of the Anti-Christ. Jesus reveals himself as the Judge who punishes unbelievers, the Conqueror who defeats Satan forever and casts him into the “lake of fire and brimstone.” He opens the “Book of Life,” and all those whose names are not in the book he casts into the lake of fire with Satan.

The Lord then pulls back the “curtain of heaven” and lets you see the wonderful scene – the Bridegroom welcoming his Bride, the Church. Read the description in Revelation 21 and 22. What a wonderful day it will be when all believers are with our Lord forever and ever in a new Earth and Heaven! Jesus promises blessings to all those who read the book of Revelation. Do not hesitate to read it even though you may not understand it all. Probably no one does! From beginning to end, the Bible is all about Jesus! Do not miss the ending! If you are a believer, your team wins! Join the team and spread the Word!

Attitude:

- How often do you think about Jesus' return?

Explore:

- Read Revelation 1:4-8 and the article, "Jesus Has an Eternal Dominion" and "What Will Life in Heaven Be Like?" (Revelation 7:13-17) Read the Scriptures and articles on the same page or nearby.

Talking to God:

- Father, start a spiritual wildfire in my heart that I might have a passion and courage to tell others about Jesus Christ before it is too late.