

## “Who Were the Apostles?”

Acts 1:1-3

**Intro:** The Book of Acts is Unique:

1. The only historical sequel to a Gospel. (no other N.T. book continues the accounts given by the Gospel authors.)
2. Background and setting for most of Paul’s writings.
3. Gives basic info. & insights into early church-life. (their tensions, persecutions, frustrations, theological problems, etc.)
4. Marks transition from a primarily Jewish focus to a world-wide focus of the Gospel.
5. Challenges modern believers & stimulates them to the zeal, faith, joy, commitment, & obedience of the first Christians.

**Main Purposes:** Historical. It accounts for the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome in just under 30 years. In addition, it provides an important explanation as to how the Christian faith went from a primarily Jewish one to a Gentile one. *If one were to ask “How did Christianity, with its roots in the O.T. and Judaism, become a worldwide religion?” the Book of Acts would be their answer.*

Perhaps most importantly, it joins what Jesus did and taught as told in the Gospels with what He continued to do and teach through the Apostles and the establishment of the Church age.

### 1. Why do the Apostles have special authority and a unique responsibility given to no others? (1-3)

A. Jesus personally gave it to them. **(2)**

- I. We ought to obey the Apostles’ teachings because Jesus chose them for this important purpose: *to carry on His teachings after He was gone.* (Luke 24:46-48)

B. They were eye witnesses. **(3)**

- I. They attested to Jesus’ resurrection personally and spent 40 days with the risen Christ. (Luke 24:36-40)

a.) Apostle John’s Testimony: 1 John 1:1-3

*“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we say His glory.” - John 1:14*

b.) Apostle Peter’s Testimony: *“This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.” - Acts 2:32*

c.) Apostle Paul’s Testimony: 1 Corinthians 15:3-8

- i.) Other witnesses: Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James (Mark 16); Two disciples on road to Emmaus (Mark 16) for example.

C. There are no capital “A” Apostles today.

a.) Biblical requirements of Apostleship: (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 1:1; 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; 12:12; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:1; 1:11)

- i.) Must have seen Jesus risen and have been chosen personally by Him.

### 2. Jesus spent 40 days here on earth after His resurrection revealing Himself to hundreds of people.

A. This is plenty of time for His enemies to have thwarted a huge scheme.

B. Before His resurrection the Apostles were scared of the Sanhedrin. After His resurrection they were as bold as lions. They had seen the risen Lord and nothing could make them waver from this reality.

C. No other religion has literally hundreds of witnesses to the super-naturalness of that religion.

### 3. Who is your “Theophilus?”

A. Luke is writing to tell someone he cares about about what Jesus said and did. Who do you care about enough to tell what Jesus said and did and what would you tell them?