**Acts**

1. *Introduction*:

Acts tells how Christ’s Church was established and grew under the leadership of the apostles. There are four records of Jesus’ life. There are twenty-one letters to the churches. There is only one record telling how the life and commission of Christ took form in the churches to which the letters were written. That record is the book of Acts.

2. *Authorship*:

All the evidence from earliest times points to Luke the physician as the author of the book. He wrote Acts as a sequel to his earlier volume, the third gospel. Luke is the only non-Jewish writer in the New Testament. Luke made the final journey with Paul to Jerusalem, stayed with him during the two years in Caesarea, and shared the voyage and shipwreck on the way to Rome. Even the most critical scholars marvel at the book’s historical accuracy.

3. *Background*:

The book covers a period of some thirty years, from the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost to the close of Paul’s imprisonment in Rome. The book describes the spread of Christianity around the northern Mediterranean—through present-day Syria, Turkey, and Greece, to the heart of the Roman Empire.

4. *Main Characters*:

The acts related in this book are mainly those of Peter and Paul. Others figuring prominently are Barnabas, Mark, and Silas.

5. *Points of Interest*:

--Acts is the inspired account of the coming, mission, and operations of the Holy Spirit.

--The book furnishes the background for at least ten of Paul’s letters—1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians, and most likely Hebrews.

6. *A Brief Outline of Acts*:

 Chapters

 1-12 The Church in Jerusalem and Judea (Peter is the main character)

 13-28 The Church moves to the rest of the known world (Paul is the main character)

7. February Reading Guide

 Week of Jan 30-Feb 5 Acts 1-7

 Week of February 6-12 Acts 8-14

 Week of February 13-19 Acts 15-21

 Week of February 20-26 Acts 22-28