# Week 1: Mission Focused

## Acts 1:1-11

1. The COVID pandemic has forced us to change how we “do church”. What changes have you observed? What changes have you noted that are “positive”? Are there any changes that you think may be “negative”?

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1. Read Acts 1:1-2 and compare it with Luke 1:1-4. How do these two books relate to each other? Why might a study of Acts be important for us today?

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1. What is the starting point of the story of Acts? (vs. 1-3)

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1. What is the “gift” that Jesus told his disciples to wait for? (vs. 4-5) How do you think they were supposed to know when the “gift” had arrived?

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1. After Jesus had been resurrected from the dead, what were Jesus’ disciples expecting to happen? (cf. v. 6)

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1. What does Acts 1:8 tell us about the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to the church?

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1. In verse 8, what is the shift that Jesus makes in his response to his disciples’ question in verse 6? How does Jesus’ promise differ from the expectation of his disciples? In what way does Jesus’ promise conform to his disciples’ expectation?

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1. “After he had said this, he was taken up before their very eyes…” (v. 9) Put yourself in the sandals of Jesus’ disciples. What would you be thinking and feeling when Jesus ascended to heaven?

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1. We often equate God’s kingdom work with what God is doing in our church and our lives. In what ways is that helpful? In what ways might that miss what God wants for our lives and for the world?

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1. How might we overemphasize the power and work of the Holy Spirit? How might we underemphasize the Holy Spirit?

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1. How can a clear focus on God’s mission help us to utilize the power of God’s Spirit?

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# Week 2: Harnessing God’s Power for Ministry

## Acts 2:1-42

1. The Bible describes many miraculous occurrences. What sorts of miraculous things do you believe God still does in our day?

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1. When you think of the word “Pentecostal”, what, if anything, comes to your mind? Does it honestly make any difference whether God still performs miracles today? If so, what difference does it make?

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1. What were the miraculous occurrences that got everyone’s attention (cf. Acts 2:2-6)?

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1. Pentecost was the only time in Acts when the Spirit came with a wind-like sound and fire-like appearance. What might have been the point of these particular signs? (compare “wind” in 2 Samuel 22:16; Ezekiel 37:9,14; John 3:8 and “fire” in Exodus 3:2, 19:18; Joel 2:30; Luke 3:16).

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1. To whom is verse 5 referring when it speaks of “God fearing Jews”? As you read verses 14-36, how did Peter adapt his message to this particular audience?

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1. What was the central focus of Peter’s sermon to the crowd that day? (cf. v. 36)

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1. Why were people “cut to the heart” by Peter’s sermon in Acts 2? Why are these reasons important for us to recognize today?

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1. What is the good and bad news from Peter’s sermon for his audience?

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1. Briefly summarize how you would tell another person they could become a Christian. Do you really believe that God can use you to lead someone to trust Jesus? Why or why not?

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1. What can we learn from Acts 2 that can help us be more effective in sharing our faith?

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#  Week 3: The Ideal Church?

## Acts 2:42-47

1. Read Acts 2:42-47. Many people use Acts 2:42-47 as an example of the church at its best. Why do you think people do that? What characteristics of the church described in this passage stand out to you?

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1. What does it mean that the first Christians were devoted to the apostles’ teaching? What things do you think the apostles were teaching (review Acts 2:14-39 for a potential preview)?

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1. What does it mean that the early Christians fellowshipped with one another and had everything in common? Where do you think that dynamic came from?

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1. Why did the early Christians sell their property and possessions to give to people in need? Where do you think that impulse came from?

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1. Why do you think the early Christians enjoyed the favor of all the people? Does this contradict Jesus’ promise that his followers would be persecuted?

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1. Why were people being added to their number daily? How do you think the early church accomplished this growth?

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1. Do you think most churches measure up to what we see in Acts 2:42-47? Why do you think that is?

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1. Is it fair to use this passage as a standard for the church? Explain your answer.

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1. What do you think is the number one thing that the church in America needs to do to better follow the model of the early church?

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1. Would you want to be a part of a church like we see in Acts 2? Why or why not? What changes might you need to make in your own life to help the church be more like we see in Acts 2?

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# Week 4: Money Matters

## Acts 4:32-35

1. Overall, how do you think the scriptures depict wealth? How does the church in America treat wealth?

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1. If you possessed more wealth than you do now, what do you think you'd do with it?

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1. What does it mean that the believers had everything in common in heart and mind? How do you think that happened?

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1. What things divide our unity as Christians? Can you rank these divisive issues in order of their divisiveness?

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1. Look at the second half of Acts 4:32. Does that description seem extreme to you? Why or why not? Is this something we should aspire to in our own lives?

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1. Does v. 32 have any connection to Jesus’ teachings?

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1. What relationship, if any, do you think v. 32 has with v. 33? In other words, did the believer's stance on wealth and possessions lead to a more powerful witness of Jesus’ resurrection?

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1. What would have prevented the believers from practicing this kind of radical generosity?

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1. What do we do with these verses? How do we practice what we see modeled here?

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# Week 5: Key Prayer Scenes in Acts

## Acts 4:1-31

**Acts 1:1**[**2-26**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%201%3A14&version=NIV) **– Prayer in anticipation of the Holy Spirit**

1. Put yourself in the disciple’s sandals, Jesus had just ascended into heaven and commissioned you to carry on His ministry. How would you have felt? How might those feelings have motivated them to be “constantly in prayer”?

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1. Can you think of a time when you found yourself particularly motivated to pray? What were the circumstances that encouraged your prayers?

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1. What difference do you think it would make if your prayer life was more constant? What do you think that would require of you?

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1. [Acts 1:24](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%201%3A24&version=NIV) is clear that when it came time to choose an apostle to replace Judas, the disciples recognized the importance of their choice and sought God’s guidance. What are the decisions in your life and ministry for which you particularly need God’s direction?

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**In Acts 4:23-31 – Powerful Prayer**

1. After Peter and John were released from jail, they went back to the people in the church and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. This report resulted in a prayer meeting. Their prayers seemed to have two themes (cf. Acts 4: 24-28 and Acts 4:29-30): what were these two themes? What do you learn from this example of prayer?

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1. According to [Acts 4:31](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%204%3A31&version=NIV), what happened when God’s people prayed? How do those verses make you feel?

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[**Acts 10:1-11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2010%3A2&version=NIV)**:18 – “Coincidental” Prayer**

1. Acts 10:3 tells us that Cornelius, a “God-fearing” Gentile, had a vision of an angel about three in the afternoon. According to Jewish practice, this was the hour of prayer. Likewise, Peter was in prayer when he had a vision from God. What do you make of this timing?

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[**Acts 12:5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2012%3A5&version=NIV) **– Comical Prayer**

1. The story of the church prayer meeting in Acts 12:1-19 is comical. What happened? What part did the believers in Jerusalem have in Peter’s escape from prison? Can you think of a time when you were surprised by God’s answer to your prayers?

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1. God saved Peter from being executed by Herod (Acts 12:6-11) but allowed James to die (Acts 12:12). What conclusions about persecution, prayer, and deliverance can we draw from these facts?

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# Week 6: Standing For What is Right

## Acts 4:1-31, 5:17-42

1. Think of a time when you knew the right thing to do but didn’t do it. What happened? Why did you back down? Did you face any consequences for your actions?

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1. Read Acts 4:1-31. How is this passage connected to the healing of the crippled man in Acts 3:1-26?

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1. In Acts 4:8-12, after Peter and John were questioned about what they had done for the crippled man, what claim did Peter make about Jesus? Why was this offensive to the Jewish leaders?

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1. What assumptions and priorities make it difficult for various groups of people today to accept Jesus even if they can’t refute the evidence? How is it possible to overcome these barriers?

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1. How did Peter and John respond to the Jewish leaders’ warnings? (cf. Acts 4:18-20). What does Peter and John’s response teach us about our “Christian response” to unjust governmental authorities?

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1. Notice Peter’s reply to the Jewish authorities in Acts 4:12. The Bible clearly claims that Jesus is the only way people can have a relationship with God (cf. John 3:36; John 14:6; Rom. 3:22 1 Tim. 2:5). Why must Christians be so “narrow minded” about this? (cf. Matthew 7:13-14)

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1. In Acts 4, the apostles were threatened by the ruling authorities. In Acts 5:12-42, they were thrown in jail and flogged. Why did God allow them to suffer even when they were doing what God wanted them to do?

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1. Read the following verses: Matt. 5:10-12; Acts 5:40; 7:54-60; 2 Timothy 3:12, 4:3-5; 1 Peter 3:14. Should we expect to be persecuted if we do what’s right? Why or why not? How did the apostles respond to their suffering? (cf. Acts 5:41) Why do you think they responded as they did?

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1. What different elements contributed to the apostles’ boldness? (cf. Acts 4:13, 19-20, 28-30).

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1. From what you observe of the boldness of the apostles, what do you need most in order to develop greater boldness for Jesus?

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# Week 7: Sore Spots

## Acts 6:1-7

1. What are some common problems that derail churches?

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1. Does the problem described in Acts 6:1 seem serious to you? Why or why not?

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1. What impact did cultural/ethnic differences play in the conflict we see in Acts 6?

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1. What are the different ways (both good and bad) the disciples could have responded to this situation?

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1. What do you think of the disciples’ solution? Did it seem to work?

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1. Why do you think this story is mentioned at all?

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1. What would have happened if the disciples hadn’t handled this situation well?

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1. Do you see any issues that the modern church might struggle with that are similar to the situation in Acts 6?

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1. What role do church leaders play in diffusing tense situations? What role should members play?

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# Week 8: The Unstoppable Church

## Reprise of Acts

1. Each day this week, read 4 chapters from the book of Acts. Each day, note the obstacles that threatened to derail God’s plan for Christ’s Church. Jot down the things that stand out.

**Acts 1-4 –**

**Acts 5-8 –**

**Acts 9-12 –**

**Acts 13-16 –**

**Acts 17-20 –**

**Acts 21-24 –**

**Acts 25-28 –**

1. What challenges have threatened FBC during your time here? What made these challenges so difficult?

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1. As you reflect on your life, what obstacles have you personally encountered that threatened God’s work in your life? Write down at least one of these to share with your small group.

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1. Read Philippians 1:4-6 – Where was Paul when he wrote this? How does this encourage you?

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1. Where does the story of Acts begin? (Note the city and the people involved). Where does the story end in chapter 28? (Again, note the city and the people involved).

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1. Think about Luke’s report in Acts 28:28. “Therefore I want you to know that God’s salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!” How does it demonstrate Jesus’ words, “Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it!”

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1. What do you feel God challenging you to do as a result of this study?

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