

The Rest of the Story



Devotional Guide



*The movement didn't stop
when the Gospel ended.*

Every good story leaves us wondering what happens next. After Jesus rose from the dead, His followers had the same question. **What now? *The Book of Acts* tells the rest of the story.**

The Holy Spirit showed up. Ordinary people found courage. The church began to move, grow, and change the world. This summer, we'll discover that Acts is not just the rest of their story. **It's the beginning of ours.**

Acts Reading Plan

Week of May 31 to June 6

- Acts 1
- Acts 2
- Acts 3

Week of June 28 to July 4

- Acts 13
- Acts 14
- Acts 15
- Acts 16

Week of June 7 to June 13

- Acts 4
- Acts 5
- Acts 6

Week of July 5 to July 11

- Acts 17
- Acts 18
- Acts 19
- Acts 20

Week of June 14 to June 20

- Acts 7
- Acts 8
- Acts 9

Week of July 12 to July 18

- Acts 21
- Acts 22
- Acts 23
- Acts 24

Week of June 21 to June 27

- Acts 10
- Acts 11
- Acts 12

Week of July 19 to July 26

- Acts 25
- Acts 26
- Acts 27
- Acts 28

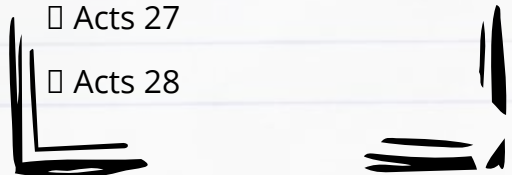


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Waiting for the Page to Turn

Waiting on God is not wasted time when we stay open to what God is forming in us.

Prologue

In Acts 1, the disciples are standing in the space between what Jesus has already done and what He is going to do next. Jesus does not give them a timeline. He gives them a promise and a mission. The Holy Spirit will come, and they will be His witnesses. Waiting can feel like nothing is happening. But Acts 1 shows us that waiting on God is not wasted time. God may be preparing us, shaping us, strengthening us, and teaching us to trust Him before the next page turns.

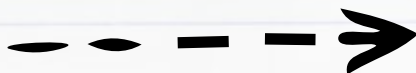
The Story

Read Acts 1:1-11.

Then they gathered around Jesus and asked Him,

“Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” After He said this, He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight.





The Story continues...

They were looking intently up into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven."

- Acts 1:6-11



Your Story

1. Where in your life do you feel like you are waiting for God to turn the page?

2. The disciples wanted a timeline, but Jesus gave them a promise and a purpose. What promise and purpose might God be giving you as you wait?

3. The disciples stood staring up at the sky, but Jesus had a purpose for them while they waited. What might God be inviting you to do while you wait?

4. What do you think God might be preparing, forming, or strengthening in you during this season of waiting?

Daily Prayer Practice

Set a timer for five minutes. Sit quietly without music, a podcast, your phone, or anything to fill the space. Let yourself practice waiting.

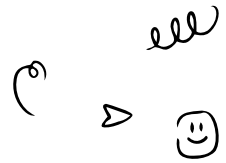
Begin by praying:

**God,
Meet me in the waiting. Help me be
present with You, not just impatient
for what comes next. Show me what
you want for me in this season.
Amen.**

As you sit in silence, pay attention to what comes up.

Anxiety? Boredom? Frustration? Peace? Hope?

What did you notice during this prayer time?



Keep Writing the Story

Waiting well means we don't waste the in-between time; we use it to grow, listen, and become more like Jesus. This summer, make the most of the season by committing to the Acts Bible Reading Plan and this devotional guide. A few minutes each day can help you pay attention to what God is doing and allow Him to form something good in you before the next page turns.

As you read Acts, underline one word or phrase that stands out in each chapter. Then use the devotional guide to reflect, pray, and practice what God is teaching you.



Waiting on God is not wasted time.

Ghost Writer

The Holy Spirit can write a better story for your life than you could on your own.

Prologue

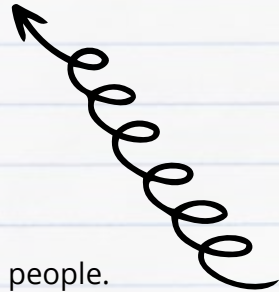
In Acts 2, God sends His Spirit to help Jesus' followers continue writing the story He started. The same Spirit who empowered the early church is still present with us today. The Holy Spirit comforts, guides, convicts, strengthens, teaches, and sends us. We do not have to write the story of our lives on our own. The Holy Spirit can write a better story than we ever could.

The Story

Read Acts 2:1-21.

“In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.
Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.
I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.”

- Acts 2:17-21



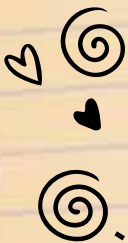
Your Story

1. When you think about the Holy Spirit, what words, images, or questions come to mind?

2. What does Peter say here about the Holy Spirit and how it works in us?

3. How have you experienced the Holy Spirit's guidance, comfort, conviction, or strength in your own life?

4. What part of your story are you trying to control or write on your own? What would it look like to invite the Holy Spirit into that part of your life?



We do not have to
write the story of
our lives on our own.

Daily Prayer Practice

Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted for five minutes.

Begin by praying a simple invitation:

Holy Spirit, I believe You are present with me.

Help me notice You. Help me hear You.

Then slowly ask these questions, leaving space after each one:

Holy Spirit, where do I need guidance?

Pause and listen.



Holy Spirit, where do I need comfort?

Pause and listen.

Holy Spirit, where do I need correction?



Pause and listen.

Holy Spirit, where are You inviting me to take one step of obedience?

Pause and listen.

What did you hear during this prayer time?

Keep Writing the Story

This week, practice letting the Holy Spirit be a Ghost Writer in your story.

As you begin your day, pray:

Holy Spirit, what do You want me to notice today?

Continue to use this prayer throughout the day.

Holy Spirit, what do You want me to notice here?

Pray it before conversations, as you walk into work, home, the grocery store, gym, etc. Pray it when you feel confused, nervous, excited, or sad.

At the end of the day, write down where you noticed the Holy Spirit.

Plot Twist

Some of God's greatest plot twists begin as interruptions to our ordinary routines.

Prologue

Peter and John are on their way to the temple for prayer. It is an ordinary day, an ordinary routine, and an ordinary walk to worship. Sometimes we think God's work only happens in the big moments, the planned moments, or the spiritual-looking moments. But in Acts 3, God works through an interruption. A conversation they did not plan. A need they did not expect. A person they almost walked past. An ordinary moment that suddenly becomes holy. God's greatest plot twists may begin when we are willing to be interrupted.



The Story

Read Acts 3:1-10.

Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

- Acts 3:6-8





*An ordinary moment
that suddenly becomes holy.*



Your Story

1. Peter and John were on their way to pray when they were interrupted by someone in need. What interruptions in your life are hardest for you to welcome?

2. How do you tend to respond to interruptions? Why do you think that's your reaction?

3. Peter "looked straight at him." Who in your life might God be inviting you to truly see instead of walk past?

4. Because they were willing to be interrupted, one man was healed and many more were amazed. How might interruptions turn into blessings?



Daily Prayer Practice



▷ Begin your day with prayer:

**God, interrupt me today.
Help me notice the people, needs,
and moments I usually rush past.
Give me eyes to see what You see.
Give me courage to offer what I have.
Use my ordinary routine for Your extraordinary work.
Amen.**

At the end of the day, take five minutes to reflect. Where was I interrupted today? Where was God present in that interruption?



Keep Writing the Story

This week, look for one person you usually pass by. It might be someone you see at school drop-off, the gym, work, church, a restaurant, the store, or your neighborhood. You do not have to perform a miracle. You do not have to have the perfect thing to say. Start by noticing them.

- Learn their name.
- Ask how they are doing.
- Offer encouragement.
- Pray for them.
- Invite them into conversation.
- Help in a practical way.

Who is one person you stopped to pay attention to this week?
How did God use this interaction?



The Story Needs YOU

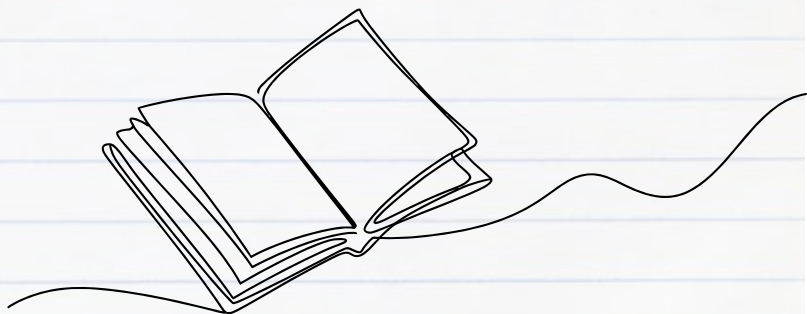
We all have an important role to play in the story God is writing.

Prologue

The church was growing rapidly. There was more ministry to do. In Acts 6, we see that the story of the church isn't written by a few people doing everything. It is written by the whole church, with each person using what God has given them. The story needs people who teach and people who pray. People who lead and people who serve. People who notice needs and people who meet them. The story needs you.

The Story

Read Acts 6:1-7.



"Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

- Acts 6:3-4, 6-7



Your Story

1. What does it look like for you to be an active partner and participant in the life and mission of the church?

2. The seven chosen leaders served in a practical way, but their work had a spiritual impact. How have you seen ordinary acts of service make a meaningful difference?

3. The apostles invited others to use their gifts to serve the church. What gifts, experiences, or passions has God given you?

4. What role might God be inviting you to play in the story He is writing through the church?

Use what God
has given you.



Daily Prayer Practice

Find a quiet place and take five minutes to pray this slowly:

**God, thank You for writing me into Your story.
Thank You for giving me gifts, experiences,
and opportunities to serve.**

Help me see the needs around me.

Help me notice the people who may be overlooked.

Help me offer what I have with humility and love.

**Use me to make Your church stronger and Your love
more visible.**

Amen.

After you pray, sit quietly for a minute and reflect:

God, where are You inviting me to serve?

Write down anything that comes to mind.

Keep Writing the Story

This week, move from thinking about serving to taking one small step toward doing it.

Start with three questions:

1. What am I good at?
2. What do I care about?
3. Where do I see a need?



Take the next step:

- Sign up for a First Serve experience at The Water's Edge
- Explore non-profits needing volunteers in your community
- Meet with a church staff member to explore opportunities
- Pray about where your gifts and the church's mission overlap
- Invite a friend or family member to serve with you
- Other

What is your next step?

First Drafts Aren't Final

Your past may explain where you've been, but it doesn't get to define where Jesus is taking you.

Prologue

Saul's story does not start well, but Jesus sees something in him that no one else can see yet. On the road to Damascus, Saul is interrupted by the risen Jesus and his life changes completely. In Acts 9, Jesus shows us that first drafts are not final. Your worst moment is not the whole story. Your past does not scare Jesus. Your mistakes do not disqualify you from grace. And the same God who rewrote Saul's future can write a new chapter in yours.

The Story

Read Acts 9:1-31.



"Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel.

- Acts 9:13-15



Your Story

1. When you think about your own past, what part of your story are you most tempted to believe defines you?

2. Ananias knew Saul's reputation, but God knew Saul's future. What opinions, labels, or expectations from others have been louder than God's voice in your life?

3. Saul's transformation began when he encountered Jesus. How has Jesus changed the direction of your story?

4. What new chapter might Jesus be inviting you to step into, even if you feel unqualified, unsure, or afraid?

✓! *Your worst moment
is not the whole story.*

Daily Prayer Practice

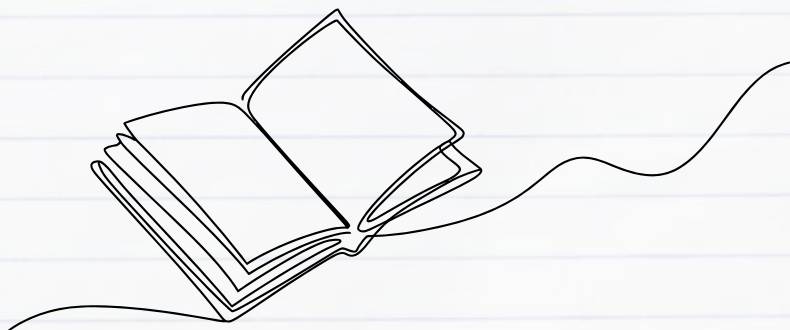
Find a time to walk the prayer path at The Water's Edge.

Reflect on your past as you make your way to the cross.

Pause at the cross and pray:

**Jesus, thank You that my first draft is not final.
Thank You that my past does not scare You.
Thank You that Your grace is bigger than my regret.
Show me where I am still letting old mistakes,
old labels, or old wounds define me.
Help me receive the new story You are writing in me.
Give me courage to follow You into the next chapter.
Amen.**

As you walk down from the cross, reflect on how
God is starting a new chapter in your life.



Keep Writing the Story

This week, practice receiving grace rather than just believing it exists. Many of us are much better at believing God forgives others than at believing He actually forgives us.

Take a few minutes this week to write down something you have had a hard time receiving forgiveness for. Be honest with God about it.

Then pray:

Jesus, I confess this to You.

Thank You for meeting me with grace.

Help me receive the forgiveness You already offer.

Teach me to stop defining myself by what You have already forgiven.

Amen.

After you pray, write this sentence:

Because of Jesus, this does not define my story.



The Plot Widens

God's grace is writing a story that includes all of us.

Prologue

Peter still has some lines in his mind about who is "in" and who is "out."

Then God gives Peter a vision, sends him to Cornelius's home, and shows him something bigger than he expected. Peter's experience in Acts 10 is the moment he realizes God's grace expands beyond our categories.

The plot widens because grace widens. And when grace widens, we may have to let God rewrite the way we see other people.

The Story

Read Acts 10.



"Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all."

- Acts 10:34-36



Your Story

1. God challenged some of Peter's assumptions about who belonged in the story. What assumptions, categories, or labels might God be challenging in you?

2. Cornelius was an unexpected character in Peter's story. How has God used unexpected people to teach you something? Who might God be using now?

3. Peter says, "God does not show favoritism." What would it look like for you to see people with that same kind of openness and grace?

4. Where is God inviting you to widen your circle, cross a boundary, or make room for someone you might not naturally include?



God's grace expands
beyond our categories.



Daily Prayer Practice

Think of someone who is outside your usual circle. It might be someone with a different background, opinion, personality, culture, life experience, or faith journey. It might even be someone you find difficult to understand. Pray for them by name:

God, You love them.

You see them.

You know their story.

Help me see them as a person, not a category.

Help me lead with humility instead of assumption.

Help me love with the grace You have given me.

Amen.

What did you notice as you prayed for this person?

Keep Writing the Story

This week, practice widening your circle.

Peter entered a home he would not normally enter, spent time with people he would not normally be around, and discovered that God was already at work there.

Connect with someone you wouldn't typically reach out to. Start a conversation. Invite them to coffee. Ask a thoughtful question. Learn their story.

Who is one person God may be inviting you to move toward this week?

What if your next conversation is
someone else's answered prayer?



Who's Writing YOUR Story?

Everyone worships something,
and what we worship eventually
writes the story of our lives.

Prologue

When Paul arrives in Athens in Acts 17, he sees a city full of idols. Everywhere he looks, people are worshipping something. We may not bow down to statues, but we all build our lives around something. Success. Comfort. Approval. Control. Money. Image. Achievement. Security. Family. Politics. Sports. The question is not whether we worship. The question is what we will worship. Because what we worship shapes what we love, what we chase, what we fear, how we spend our time, and who we become.

The Story

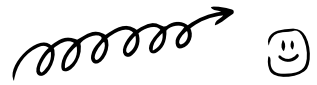
Read Acts 17:16-34.



"Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you."

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands."

Your Story



1. Paul looked carefully at what the people of Athens worshiped. If someone looked carefully at your calendar, spending, priorities, and worries, what might they think you worship?

2. The people of Athens were searching for God, even if they did not fully know who they were searching for. Where do you see people looking for meaning, purpose, or security today?

3. How do our idols, the things we worship besides God, influence us?

4. Where do you see your priorities, fears, or habits being shaped by something other than Jesus?

We may not bow down to statues, but we all build our lives around something.

Autobiography

God can use your story to help someone else recognize His work in theirs.

Prologue

In Acts 22, Paul stands in front of a crowd. He does not start with a complicated sermon. He starts with his own life. He talks about his life before and after Jesus. Your story does not have to include a blinding light from heaven to be powerful. You just need to be honest about where you have seen Jesus at work. Your story may be ordinary to you, but in God's hands, it can become an invitation for someone else.

The Story

Read Acts 22:1-22.

"A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. He stood beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him.

"Then he said: 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard. And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

- Acts 22:12-16



Your Story

1. Paul shared honestly about who he was before he met Jesus. What words would you use to describe your life before having a relationship with Jesus?

2. Paul's story changed when he encountered Jesus. Describe the first moments you truly understood and experienced Jesus.

3. Ananias was an important character in Paul's story. Who has had a significant impact on your story?

4. Paul tells his story to inspire others to see God in their own stories. What part of your story could help someone else recognize God's work in theirs?

Your story may be ordinary to you, but an invitation for someone else.

Daily Prayer Practice

Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted for five minutes.

Begin by praying:

**God, thank You for being present in my story.
Help me see my life with honesty, grace, and courage.
Show me where You have been working, even in the
chapters I didn't understand at the time. Give me the
courage to share my story with others.
Amen.**

Then slowly ask these questions, leaving space after each one:

**God, what part of my story do I need to
remember with gratitude?**

Pause and listen.

Who might need to hear a piece of my story this week?

Pause and listen.

What did you hear during this prayer time?

The Chapter You Didn't Choose

Faith is trusting that God is still writing, even when all you can see is wreckage.

Prologue

Acts 27 is one of those chapters where everything goes wrong. But in the middle of the storm, Paul stands up and reminds everyone that God is still present. The ship may be lost, but they are not. The storm is real, but it is not the end. The wreckage is painful, but God is still writing. Faith does not mean we avoid every storm. Faith means we trust God in the storm. Even when all we can see is wreckage. God has not abandoned the story.

The Story

Read Acts 27.



"I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

- Acts 27:22-26

Your Story



1. Paul found himself in a chapter he did not choose. What chapter of your life feels difficult, disappointing, or different than what you planned?

2. When life feels overwhelming or out of your control, how do you usually respond?

3. The ship was destroyed, but the people were saved. What is something you may need to release or let go of while still trusting that God is protecting what matters most?

4. Paul said, "I have faith in God that it will happen just as He told me." What promise, truth, or reminder from God do you need to hold onto in this season?

...God is still writing.

Daily Prayer Practice

Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted for five minutes.

Begin by praying:

**God,
Thank You that Your story is still being written.
Help me see where You are inviting me to join
You. Give me courage to live with purpose, hope,
and faithfulness beyond this summer.
Amen.**

Then slowly ask these questions, leaving space after each one:

God, what have You taught me this summer?

Pause and listen.

Where have You been forming something new in me?

Pause and listen.

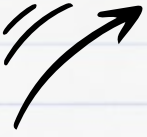
**Where are You sending me to love,
serve, encourage, or witness?**

Pause and listen.

What is one next step You are inviting me to take?

Pause and listen.

What did you hear during this prayer time?



We have reached the end of the Book of Acts, but not the end of the story. Acts shows us what can happen when ordinary people trust Jesus, follow the Holy Spirit, serve the church, receive grace, widen the circle, tell their stories, and keep faith even in the storms. The same God who was writing through Peter, Paul, Ananias, Cornelius, and the early church is still writing today. Turn the page for more reflections.



What is one next step you want to take as you keep living the story God is writing in you?



*The story continues
through YOU!*





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