

The book may be divided into three parts:

1. Chaps. 1-12, describing the first twelve years of the Christian church. This section has been entitled "From Jerusalem to Antioch." It contains the history of the planting and extension of the church among the Jews by the ministry of Peter.
2. Chaps. 13-21, Paul's missionary journeys, giving the history of the extension and planting of the church among the Gentiles.
3. Chaps. 21-28, Paul at Rome, and the events which led to this. Chaps. 13-28 have been entitled "From Antioch to Rome."

_ Summary of Acts – Early Chapters

I. Introduction (1:1-26)

1. Preface (1-5)
2. Final appearance of Christ (6-11)
3. Picture of the church in the period between ascension and Pentecost (12-26)

II. Witnessing in Jerusalem (2:1-8:3)

A. The day of Pentecost (2:1-47)

1. Outpouring of the Spirit (1-13)
2. Preaching of Peter (14-41)
3. Summary of the life of the new converts (42-47)

B. The healing of the lame man (3:1-4:31)

1. The miracle (3:1-10)
2. The message (3:11-26)
3. The arrest (4:1-4)
4. The trial (4:5-22)
5. The sequel (4:23-31)

C. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira (4:32-5:11)

1. The originating circumstances (4:32-37)
 - a) The general condition of the church (32-35)
 - b) The generous example of Barnabas (36-37)

2. The sin (5:1-11)

D. The growing power of the apostles (5:12-42)

1. The evidences (12-16)
2. The effect (17-42)

E. The appointment of "The Seven" (6:1-7)

1. Occasion (1-2)
2. Method used (3-5)
3. Qualifications (3)
4. Nature of their work (2-4)
5. Ordination (6)
6. Result (7)

F. The martyrdom of Stephen (6:8-8:3)

- 1. The arrest (6:8-15)**
- 2. The defense (7:1-53)**
- 3. The death (7:54-8:3)**

III. Witnessing in Judea and Samaria (8:4-12:25)

A. The witness of Philip (8:4-40)

- 1. Planting the gospel in Samaria (4-25)**
- 2. Explaining the gospel to the Ethiopian (26-39)**
- 3. Preaching the gospel from Azotus to Caesarea (40)**

from <http://www.cranfordville.com/Actsout.htm>

Parallels

The Apostles in Acts	Jesus in Luke's Gospel
The Holy Spirit descends on the apostles at Pentecost (2:1-4)	The Holy Spirit descends on Jesus at his baptism (3:21-22)
Peter preaches, quoting from the prophet Joel (2:16-36)	Jesus preaches, after reading from the prophet Isaiah (4:14-30)
The apostles call people to join them (2:37-41, 47b)	Jesus calls his first followers (5:1-11, 27-32)
Peter and John heal a beggar (3:1-10)	Jesus heals a blind beggar (18:35-43)
The high priest arrests some of the apostles and questions them before the council (4:1-22)	Jesus is arrested and interrogated by the council (22:47-71)
Summaries the "signs and wonders" of the apostles, especially healings / exorcisms (5:12-16; 8:6-7, 13)	The narrator summarizes the healing and exorcistic activity of Jesus (4:40-41; 6:17-19)
The sick are healed through Peter's shadow (5:15) and Paul's handkerchiefs or aprons (19:11-12)	A woman is healed when she touches the fringes of Jesus' clothing (8:43-48)
The Jewish leaders want to kill the apostles, because of their teachings (5:17-42)	Jewish leaders plot to kill Jesus, partly due to his teachings (19:45-48)
Peter raises Tabitha (a.k.a. Dorcas) from the dead (9:36-42)	Jesus raises a widow's son from the dead (7:11-17)
The apostles encounter a pious Roman centurion (10:1-48)	Jesus heals the son of a faithful Roman centurion (7:1-10)
Paul feel compelled by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem, despite the dangers that await him there (19:21; 21:8-17)	Jesus is determined to go to Jerusalem, despite the dangers that await him there (9:51; 13:33; 19:11-28)
Paul is welcomed in Jerusalem by the believers, and soon goes to the temple (21:17-26)	Jesus is welcomed in Jerusalem by large crowds, and soon goes to the temple (19:28-48)
Paul is seized by a Jewish mob that wants him killed, but later stands trial before Roman governors (21:30-36; 23:23-26:32)	Jesus is arrested by a Jewish mob, but is later turned over to the Roman procurator for trial (22:47-54; 23:1-25)
Paul argues against the Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection (23:6-9)	Jesus is questioned by some Sadducees, who dispute the concept of resurrection (20:29-38)
Paul takes bread, gives thanks, breaks it, and eats (27:35; cf. 20:7-11)	Jesus takes bread, says a blessing, breaks it, and gives it to the disciples to eat (27:35; cf. 24:30)
As he is being stoned to death, Stephen hands his spirit over to the Lord Jesus and forgives his executioners (7:59-60)	As he is dying on the cross, Jesus forgives his executioners and hands his spirit over to God (23:34, 46)

Notes from Bart D. Ehrman's book, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, page 129.

Motifs in Acts and Luke:

- Emphasis on Jewish origins of Christianity, its fulfillment of the Jewish Scriptures, and its continuity with Judaism
- The portrayal of Jesus as a Jewish prophet, rejected by his own people
- The consequent movement of the religion from the Jews to the Gentiles, with the concomitant geographical shift from the holy city of Jerusalem to the ends of the earth
- The proclamation to Jew and Gentile alike of salvation through the repentance of sins and the forgiveness of God
- The stress that Gentiles who accept this offer of salvation need not adopt all the ways of Judaism
- The delay of the time of the end to make Christian mission possible
- The rightness of this religion in both the divine sense (came from God in fulfillment of the Scriptures) and the human one (it did nothing to violate Jewish custom or Imperial law)
- The complete unity and harmony of the church as guided by the apostles, who agree on every issue and resolve every problem through the direction of the Spirit
- Ultimately, the hand of God directing the course of Christian history behind the scenes, from Jesus' own life and death to the life and ministry of the apostles that he left behind.

Links:

Detailed outline: <http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Acts.htm>

Simpler outline: <http://www.cranfordville.com/Actsout.htm>