

KEY WORDS OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

The key words of any book reveal its central message. In the Book of Acts certain words appeared oft, displaying its great themes:

Paul — 154 times; Peter — 64 times; the Holy Ghost — 50 times; the Word of God — 48 times; Jesus or the Lord — 34 times; Apostle or Apostles — 30 times; Witness or Testimony — 30 times; Prayer — 28 times.

A Paragraph Using All Key Words

In the Book of Acts the **apostles** went forth as **witnesses**, bearing **testimony** unto **Jesus**, the risen **Lord**, and proclaiming the **Word of God** with boldness; and the **Holy Ghost** filled them, strengthened them, and guided them in prayer. Among them **Peter** stood forth mightily in the beginning, and afterward **Paul** was raised up as a chosen vessel; and through these apostles the Lord established His Church, for they moved not by their own wisdom, but by the power of the Holy Ghost.

THE BOOK OF ACTS AND THE MYSTERY OF THE KEYS

Throughout many generations the Church hath asked concerning the meaning of the **keys** promised by our Lord Jesus Christ unto His disciples, saying, *“Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven”* (Matthew 18:18). The Book of Revelation declared likewise concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: *“I have the keys of hell and of death”* (Revelation 1:18); and again, *“He that opened, and no man shuttled; and shuttled, and no man opened”* (Revelation 3:7).

Therefore the Book of Acts revealed unto us how the Lord Jesus Christ gave these **heavenly keys** unto His apostles, by whose hands the Church beheld mighty and glorious works.

KEY NUMBER ONE: THE HOLY GHOST

In the Book of Acts the **Holy Ghost** standeth forth as the central power, the heavenly strength whereby the apostles turned the world upside down.

THE NINEFOLD WORK OF THE HOLY GHOST

1. **The Great Commander** (Acts 1:2)
2. **The Inspirer of Prophecy** (Acts 2:4; 4:31; 11:28; 13:1; 16:6)
3. **The Fulfiller of Prophecy** (Acts 17:2–18)
4. **The Promise of the Father** (Acts 2:33)
5. **The Gift of God** (Acts 2:38)
6. **The Comforter of the Church** (Acts 9:31)
7. **The Heavenly Rain** (Acts 2:17–18)
8. **The Giver of Joy** (Acts 13:52)

THE TENFOLD RELATIONSHIP OF THE DISCIPLES TO THE HOLY GHOST

1. **Filled with the Holy Ghost** (Acts 1:8)
2. **Baptized with the Holy Ghost** (Acts 1:5)
3. **Receivers of the Holy Ghost** (Acts 8:15)
4. **Filled with the Holy Ghost** (Acts 2:4)
5. **Witnesses with the Holy Ghost** (Acts 5:32)
6. **Moved by the Holy Ghost** (Acts 5:18)

7. **Appointed by the Holy Ghost** (Acts 20:23)
8. **Sent forth by the Holy Ghost** (Acts 13:2)
9. **Caught away by the Holy Ghost** (Acts 8:39)
10. **Led by the Holy Ghost** (Acts 8:29)

THE DOORS OPENED BY THE HOLY GHOST

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch — The Spirit opened the way for Philip to preach salvation unto the Ethiopian (Acts 8).

Peter and Cornelius — the Spirit opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles (Acts 10).

The Council at Jerusalem — The Spirit guided the apostles to discern the truth concerning the Gentiles and their liberty in Christ (Acts 15).

Thus the Book of Acts showed plainly that every door that opened, every soul that turned, every miracle that was wrought, and every nation that received the Gospel—all these were accomplished by the Holy Ghost, the divine Key given unto the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ.

KEY NUMBER TWO: PRAYER

Prayer is that sacred path which joined the believers unto heaven. It is as a **ladder** reaching upward, even as we behold in *Genesis 28:10–13*. Through prayer the Holy Ghost is also received; for by this holy way we obtain direction from above. In the Book of Acts the apostles placed their full dependence upon God, and this reliance is manifested in their continual life of prayer. Out of the twenty-eight chapters of Acts, **seventeen chapters** speak of prayer. One hath rightly said, *“How much thou trustiest God is revealed by how much thou prayest.”*

THE PRAYER LIFE OF THE APOSTLES

The apostles remained steadfast in prayer, their lives bearing witness that all their strength flowed from Heaven.

1. The Apostles Continued in Prayer

(Acts 2:42)

They gave themselves continually unto prayer and fellowship.

2. They Appointed Times for Prayer

(Acts 6:4)

They set aside seasons that they might give themselves wholly unto prayer and the ministry of the Word.

3. They Prayed Regularly

(Acts 1:3; 1:10; 2:4; 5:12; 12:3; 13:16; 14:23)

Prayer was not occasional but constant; it was the breath of their ministry.

PRAYER IN SPECIAL OCCASIONS

4. They Prayed in Times of Important Decisions

i. At the Choosing of Leadership

(Acts 1:24)

They sought the mind of God when appointing one to take part in the apostolic ministry.

ii. At the Appointment of Ministers

(Acts 6:6)

When they ordained servants for the work, they prayed and laid hands upon them.

iii. When Sending Forth Labourers

(Acts 13:3)

Before sending missionaries into the harvest, they fasted and prayed.

iv. At the Ordaining of Elders

(Acts 14:23)

With fasting and prayer they committed the elders unto the Lord.

v. When Parting from Dear Brethren

(Acts 20:36; 21:5)

Their farewells were sealed with prayer and weeping before God.

PRAYERS FOR SPECIAL REQUESTS AND NECESSITIES

5. They Prayed for Specific Needs

i. For Boldness

(Acts 4:31)

They lifted their voices together, and the place was shaken.

ii. For the Receiving of the Holy Ghost

(Acts 8:15)

They prayed for believers that they might receive the Spirit.

iii. for the Raising of the Dead

(Acts 9:40)

Peter prayed, and Dorcas arose.

iv. for Peter's Deliverance

(Acts 12:5, 12)

The Church prayed without ceasing for him.

V. For the Will of God to Be Known

(Acts 16:16)

They sought guidance in every circumstance.

Vi. for Deliverance

(Acts 16:25)

At midnight they prayed, and the prison doors were opened.

Vii. for Healing

(Acts 28:8)

Paul prayed, laid hands on the sick man, and he was healed.

THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AND PRAYER

The Church of the New Testament was **born in prayer**, and thereafter prayer became the **key of their victory**. The Christians of Acts **breathed in an atmosphere of prayer**, believed in the power of prayer, and began and ended every work with steadfast prayer. Thus prayer became unto them a heavenly key by which doors were opened, chains were loosed, the sick were healed, the dead were raised, and the Gospel went forth unto the ends of the earth.