

SUMMER 1 - Getting Started with Acts

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[0 : 00] Well friends, let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word.

Thank you that you know our nature, that we cannot live by bread alone, but must live by every word that proceeds from your mouth. We thank you for the great opportunity we have to, without fear, come and study your word together, and to do so publicly.

We thank you for this, for we recognise that this is a privilege not allowed many of our brothers and sisters around the world. And Father, we pray tonight that you would help us to be wise, help us to take the things that we learn and to apply them well.

Please help us, Father, to learn great things and to live rightly in response to them. And we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Well friends, I want to welcome you here tonight.

I hope you return each Wednesday and Sunday. I know some of you have other commitments on Sundays, but at least Wednesdays and hopefully Sundays as well. You see, I've come to love these January sessions.

[1 : 15] They really do offer something very, very special. I mean, where else can you go and hear a series of 8 to 10 expositions on one book of the Bible with a group of people keen to grapple with and understand the Scriptures and do so in one month.

It's really a great opportunity. And this year we offer you a special treat. You see, this year we're going to spend a month looking at the book which a great 4th century preacher, John Chrysostom, called, A Strange New Dish.

You see, the book of the Acts of the Apostles is not in the Old Testament. It's not a gospel. It's not an epistle. And therefore it does not naturally fit within the normal Bible reading pattern of most churches.

It is often referred to in sermon illustrations. But my experience is that it is rarely the focus of a detailed and systematic exposition.

And that is an incredibly great pity. For the pages of the book of Acts bring us face to face with grand promises fulfilled.

[2 : 22] For example, the Old Testament prophets had promised that God would pour His Spirit out on His people. Within two chapters of the beginning of Acts this has happened. Jesus had promised that those who believed in Him would do works even greater than His own works.

Well, here within Acts we see this happen again. Jesus also promised that the disciples would be brought before rulers, religious authorities, kings and the like.

And that they would suffer grievously and yet overcome. This happens in Acts. Jesus promised Him that through them the gospel would be preached in all the world.

This also is paraded before us in this grand book. The apostles take what they've learnt. They journey. They're martyred. They suffer.

But as they do all of these things they preach. And those who are appointed to eternal life believe and are converted. And the world is turned upside down by their preaching.

[3 : 27] And the hopes and dreams of God's prophets and saints are fulfilled within the pages of this book. You see, this is the stuff of the Acts of the Apostles.

But not only is it a book full of fulfilled promises, it is a book replete with Christian doctrine and practice. Full of lives that are transformed by the great news of the gospel.

Abounding with stories of gospel ministry under threat. Overflowing with adventure for the sake of the gospel if you can call it that. The first Christian missionaries. Adventure on the high seas.

Friends. Shipwrecks. Councils. Debates. Churches praying and seeing their prayers answered in spectacular and unexpected ways.

Miracles. Riots. Disasters. Surprises. Friends. Friends. We are about to engage in a rare and beautiful adventure. So be ready for this rare treat as John Chris Austin put it.

[4 : 28] Keep coming. And soak up with me this great drama of God's work among his people. The ongoing work of the Lord Jesus Christ and the acts and power of the Holy Spirit.

Now that introduction out of the way I want to tell you what we're going to do tonight. You see, tonight this is a bit different from everything else we're going to do in the succeeding weeks because I'm going to give you some theory more than I'm going to give you application.

There will be some application and there will be more application in the things that come in the following weeks. But I do have a defined goal for tonight. I want to use our time together to give you a picture of what Acts is about and how to read it and interpret it and as well how not to read it and interpret it.

And I'm going to do this by reflecting on the meaning of the first four verses and then illustrating from the rest of the book. So with that in mind please open your Bibles at Acts chapter 1.

Now you'll see in your outlines that I've put Acts 1 and Luke 1 in front of you as well at the top of your outline side by side to make it easier for you to compare them. And I want you to do that now.

[5 : 35] Quickly scan through Luke 1 first few verses Acts 1 first few verses and I want you to just recall what is it that is similar there.

What do you notice? Well the first thing you notice is the similarity of style and introduction don't you to both Luke and Acts.

What is the second thing you notice? Well the books are addressed to the same person. Both are addressed to Theophilus. The clear implication is isn't it that Luke and Acts belong together.

They are part of the same work therefore in order to understand Acts we actually need to be quite careful. We need to be careful not to isolate Acts from Luke.

What's more we need to understand Luke and to understand Luke we need to understand what Luke thinks he's doing. So have a look at a have a closer look at the heading for the two volume work which is in Luke chapter 1 and I'm going to read it to you verses 1 to 4.

[6 : 44] Luke says Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us just as they were handed on to us from those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word well I too decided after investigating everything carefully from the very first to write an orderly account for you most excellent Theophilus so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed Now I want you to notice what Luke says 1.

He is concerned with actual historical events an orderly account of the things fulfilled among us 2. He is concerned with accuracy and verifiable accuracy He talks about the account being handed on to him by those who were eyewitnesses after careful observation or investigation 3.

He is concerned with informing or persuading others regarding these facts that is he doesn't want to just outline facts he wants to persuade others regarding those facts he talks about Theophilus knowing the truth concerning the things about which he's been instructed so he wants to actually educate people these are Luke's concerns at the beginning of his first volume work and they should also stand as a sort of heading over the whole two volumes so we need to bear his concerns in mind when we read Acts Luke is concerned with history with accurate and verifiable history and the book of Luke and the book of Acts are dealing with a sort of history that is like that and the events of Luke and Acts actually happen and can be checked out but they have a purpose and that is to strengthen faith however having said all of that and particularly having stressed the historical value of what is here that is not all to be said about history and Luke

Acts you see some of us when we think about history think about think that history means recording everything that happened where it happened and when it happened now no history is actually like that but we think that's what it should be like history is we think an accurate unbiased reporting of events but I want to make it clear that that is not the sort of history that we are dealing with in Luke Acts nor is it the sort of history that we're dealing with in most of the Old Testament no Luke clearly picks and chooses and he picks and chooses around various themes and interests that he has he has a particular message you see that he wants to get across and he's gathered information together around these particular themes so what I'm saying to you is that you shouldn't read the book of Luke or the book of Acts if you're concerned with factual uninterpreted history no this is factual interpreted history that is what it is

Luke is a historian but Luke also wants to persuade his readers about something he has a purpose in writing and we should keep our eyes open for what it is third thing I want you to notice is that he regards his story as being fundamentally about Jesus Jesus is the focus of all that he writes look at it in Acts chapter 1 verses 1 to 5 and as I do I want you to notice a little change that I'm suggesting and I'll read the little change instead of what's there in the NRSV because I'm not sure the NRSV is that good at this point in the first book Theophilus I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and teach that's how the NIV for example and the ESV translates it from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen you see

[10 : 46] I'm not convinced that the NRSV captures the meaning of the original which refers back to Luke's gospel what I think Luke is saying is this that in his first volume he wrote about all that Jesus began to do and teach the implication is in this second volume he is speaking about what Jesus continued to do and teach in other words as I've already said the words of Luke 1 1 to 4 apply also to the book of Acts Luke's gospel is about Jesus it's about the beginnings of Jesus ministry it is about what Jesus began to do and teach until he was taken up into heaven verse 2 and Acts is also about Jesus and it though is about Jesus being far from dead but what it is about is what Jesus continues to do and teach post resurrection post ascension he still speaks to people directly he still issues commands he still acts through his

Holy Spirit so whatever other purpose Luke has in mind in his writing his aim in his two volume work is to tell people about Jesus and who Jesus is and what Jesus did before his death and what Jesus did after his death and about what Jesus meant to the people that he touched before his death and after his death so Luke is not only a historian he's a historian with a purpose and his purpose is to persuade us to see that the message about Jesus is for all people including us but let's look a bit closer at Acts 1 1-5 and see what he specifically has to say about the book of Acts the first couple of verses tell us that Acts continues to tell us about Jesus but they also tell us about two other persons did you notice them there for example verse 2 tells us about the Holy Spirit it tells us that the apostles that Jesus had chosen and left behind so two other groups of people or persons the

Holy Spirit and the apostles that Jesus had chosen and left behind and if we combine that with verse 1 then we'll understand what Luke is about in his second volume he is about the historical but structured reporting of the continued acts of Jesus which he performed by his Holy Spirit through his apostles so I've tried to capture both the introduction to Luke and the introduction to Acts let me repeat it in Acts Luke is about the historical but structured reporting of the continuing acts of Jesus which he performed by his Holy Spirit through his apostles so when you read Acts be prepared for a few things be prepared to learn lots about Jesus be prepared to see many references to the

Holy Spirit and be prepared to see the apostles in action but as you do don't forget that the Holy Spirit and the apostles must never take center stage center stage must always go to Jesus even though he's often the invisible player and in this sense New Testament narrative is just like Old Testament narrative you see in the historical book of the Old Testament God is often an invisible player isn't he you go on for chapter after chapter chapter you go on for ten chapters and don't hear about God at all but you know he's the invisible player so in Old Testament narrative you often see that we know God is there we know God is guiding all things but the people we see are not him so it is in the New Testament narrative and I think here in Acts Jesus is often an invisible player in

Acts you see he's there the story is about him and the story of the apostles is more about him than about anything else but often it's as though he's not actually there you can't actually see him as it were so when we interpret Acts we need to interpret it in the light of Jesus and that's the first thing about interpreting Acts and I want to move on and give you intriguing because it's the only time in the New Testament that we're told of the period of time during which

[16:03] Jesus appears that is we're told it's 40 days the implications are that his appearing was not just one or two you see if you've read the gospel narratives you might think he appeared on resurrection day and he appeared once or twice after that and he appeared to some disciples on the Jesus had spent how many days in the wilderness preparing for his own ministry 40 and now he spends 40 days with his apostles preparing them for their ministry it's wonderful when you start seeing the parallels between Luke and Acts the second thing of instruction was about the kingdom of God Jesus taught his apostles about the kingdom of God just as he'd done in the beginning of his own ministry when he was alive so again a parallel teaching about the kingdom of

God you read Luke it's all about Jesus telling them about the kingdom of God and then there is a third very particular instruction while he staying with them probably translated eating with them he instructed them not to leave Jerusalem they were to wait for the promise of the Father and verse 5 makes it clear that the promise is that of the Holy Spirit now the promise of the baptism in the Holy Spirit has been specified by John the Baptist in Luke and Mark and John however what does it mean when Jesus talks about the promise of the Father not John the Baptist but the promise of the Father he's already referred to it in Luke 24 and my suspicions are that it refers to a cluster of passages in the Old Testament about the promised Spirit now if you want to write some of them down you can check them out later Isaiah 32 verse 15 would be one

Isaiah 32 verse 15 Ezekiel 36 verses 24 to 32 and the next very famous one because it occurs in the next chapter of Acts Joel 2 28 to 32 and it is these things that the apostles are to wait for this is the fulfillment of the hopes and dreams of their prophets a new people filled with God's Holy Spirit a new people who have new hearts of flesh rather than hearts of stone as Ezekiel puts it a people whose tongues speak the very words of God to God's world that is what everyone has been waiting for remember when the first prophets appeared and they prophesied like Moses and the elders said you know let's shut them down and remember what Moses says no if only all prophesied this day comes in the next chapter this day comes when all of

God's people will speak God's words and be as it were prophets to the world okay that's by way of a large introduction to just these few verses we've looked at what Luke and Acts is about what we'll do now is raise the issue of how we should study it to do this I've selected a particular story it's a very famous story turn with me in your Bibles to Acts chapter 5 and I'm going to read the story to you but I want you to listen to it as you read or as you follow it and I want you to think about how emotionally you react to the story that's the first thing how do you emotionally react to this story as it's read and then I want you to ask why do you think it's here in Acts chapter 5 now a man but a man named Ananias with the consent of his wife Sapphira sold a piece of property with his wife's knowledge he kept back some of the proceeds and brought back only a part and laid it at the apostles feet

Ananias Peter asked why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land while it remained unsold did it not remain your own and after it was sold were not the proceeds at your disposal how is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart you did not lie to us but to God now when Ananias heard these words he fell down and died seized all who heard of it and the young men came and wrapped up his body and carried him out and buried him after an interval about three hours his wife came in not knowing what had happened and Peter said to her tell me whether you and your husband sold the land for such and such a price and she said yes that was the price and then Peter said to her how the feet of those who have buried your husband and buried her beside her husband and great fear seized the whole church and all who heard these things and well they might now since we are going to look at this passage later

[21 : 47] I'm not going to explain it all now but what I want to ask you is whether or not you think this sort of incident happened every time Christians met together when they turned up at church were people constantly being confronted by the apostles and carried out of church dead was this the norm more than that is this the sort of incident we should hope to see every Sunday at our church if you're members of Holy Trinity the rest of you can just not worry about it so much should I your pastor examine your property holdings financial dealings and giving and announce God's curse if you're not being as generous as you should be some some some of you are nodding now you can ask the same sort of question can't you about many passages in the New Testament and particularly in Acts but let's concentrate on this one and let's remember that the passage immediately before this one tells us that those who owned lands or houses sold them and bought the money to be distributed among the needy is that normal

Christian practice should it be should we say that because it happened then it should happen now what do you think but let's travel in the other direction let's look at the passage immediately after this one in Acts we're told of other incidents we're told that the apostles performed various signs and wonders for example when Peter walked past people the passing of his shadow over them was enough to heal them if they were sick so let me ask you is this normal Christian practice should we say that because it happened then it should happen now let's travel elsewhere in Acts elsewhere in Acts God guides his people through dreams and visions should this be normal Christian experience can you see the point that I'm making here I think often we're pretty choosy about what we read and how we interpret it through Acts what we are dealing with though in

Acts is descriptions of actual events what's more the events that are described are often more often than not unusual events that's why they're there because they were unusual not because they were the norm it was because they were unusual that's why they get singled out and it's because they're unusual they're remembered and considered important enough to remember that's why people talk about them all the time please understand what I'm saying the stories in Acts are exactly what they are they are descriptions of what actually happened in the first century now they are loaded also with deep theology they're examples of Christian conduct we're not told though you need to note this as well whether it's good or bad Christian conduct conduct that we should emulate or not they are examples we also must be very careful we must avoid turning a description of something into a prescription for something be very careful about saying that because something happened there then it must happen here otherwise well you might have to find a temple to attend and you might have to turn up to it three times a day for prayer and you'll also have to pick up poisonous snakes to demonstrate your invulnerability to their poison and you may also have to sell your property and bring the proceeds to me here to distribute to the poor in our congregation and if you lie about it well I'll have to call down

God's judgment on you and ask God to kill you can you see what I'm saying the list could go on all day proper interpretation of acts recognizes that what acts is about is description proper interpretation refuses to say that because it happened this way in this way in acts it must happen this way today we need to be very careful at this point that is not to say that we cannot expect the same things today but be very careful in saying in prescribing that they must happen today remember remember that Luke wrote both books to be read together so here are some other hints about interpreting acts and I'll give them to you just very briefly here are a few hints about interpreting acts remember that Luke wrote both books to be read together there are many parallels between the two volumes and if you check them out they really are profound for example Jesus receives the spirit for ministry the church receives the spirit for ministry we've already seen one about 40 days there's the centrality of the word very pronounced in Luke's gospel very pronounced in Acts there is the arrival of salvation very pronounced in Luke very pronounced in Acts there is the welcoming of

Gentiles very it's there in Luke it's there in Acts you will also find that there's a passion story in Luke and a passion story in Acts you see in about the middle of Luke Jesus sets his eyes to go toward Jerusalem and if you read very carefully you'll find in about two thirds of the way through Acts Paul sets his eyes on going to Jerusalem the phrase is not used but that's what he's doing you'll find it in the address to the Ephesian elders in Acts 21 so it's there there's a parallel and then you see him move toward Jerusalem and there he suffers the only thing is he escapes and he goes on now second thing the Old Testament figures prominently in both Luke and Acts in Acts it features in both speeches and themes so you must read Acts in the light of the Bible of the early church which was not our

[27:57] New Testament but the Old Testament if you really want to understand what is happening in those quotations of prophecy you really need to read the Old Testament third I think hint I'm up to the epistles provide what we could call an interpretive or hermeneutical grid through which we must read the book of Acts because of the theological nature sorry historical nature of Acts the theological explanation and significance of events is often only just implied in the text but the Pauline epistles which are written at about the same time offer a commentary and explanation of Acts because they're written during those times we would therefore be unwise not to test the application and significance of what we glean from Acts against the epistles of Paul and the other epistles as well a man called Johnson has said we will be very cautious about accepting as normative today any element of the narrative of

Acts that is not confirmed in the exhortation of the epistles I think that is very sober and sane advice finally Acts is a highly structured and intricate work we need to appreciate any text within the structure of the whole and as we go through Acts I'm going to show you some of the structure of Acts and it's just marvellous so there we go there's some introduction to interpreting Acts what I want to do now is give you some snapshots of Acts to point out some of these things in actions turn with me to Acts 26 this is remember a description this is something an event being described now this particular story is described recorded three times in the book of Acts the first time is in Acts chapter 9 the second is in Acts 22 and the third time is this one here Acts 26 it is the story of the conversion of

Saul I mean that's a testimony three times in a book that's fairly significant it's not a long book really three times and the fact that Luke has included it three times means he considers it to be a very important event not only that he considers the retelling of the telling of that event to be very important why well let me suggest you see the man being converted here was a Jew he was an ideologue a Jew convinced that Jewishness was what life was all about that being a good law keeping Jew was what God required he was in many ways an ideal Jew he was the sort of Jew that Jews look up to and seek to emulate moreover he was a Jew who was well informed about Christianity he saw it and he thought he understood it in fact he considered that he understood it so well that he knew it was wrong and he knew it needed to be stamped out and

Luke tells us in 9 22 and 26 that it was this man that was miraculously confronted by God God broke through to him and this Saul became the Christian Paul more than that he became a zealous and active Christian and the faith that he once tried to squash was the one he became a propagator of it was this Jew turned Christian that God chose to become the one who would preach the Christian gospel to Gentiles this Jew turned Christian would become the most eloquent exponent of Christianity he would become the person who wrote some of the most influential literature in Christianity and therefore in world history he is the one whose conversion means that you and I are able to be Christian because he's the apostle Jews around but he's the apostle to us Gentiles his story is important because he is so important and that's why most of the book of

Acts is about him but the story of Saul turned Paul is important for other reasons as well it is important because it shows us that the gospel is incredibly powerful it is powerful enough to touch and change the most ardent of opponents the man who would later call himself the chief of sinners it is powerful enough to turn a persecutor and chief of sinners into a saint it is powerful because the gospel is God's word finally the story of Paul is important because of how Paul uses it you see when Paul talks about Christianity he doesn't just talk about Jesus but he also talks a little bit about himself you see when God works it is not just in the removed world of ideas Christianity is about a personal interaction of God and human beings it is about a personal relationship with

[33 : 23] God and Paul's three times testimony parades that before us it says here is God interacting with a human being it is about people being personally confronted by God and being changed by God Christianity is about people and that is why Paul's story is here he is not only the persecutor of Christians he is not only the apostle to the Gentiles he saw the man who met Jesus and was transformed by him he is Paul the human being like you and like me he is Paul not one of the twelve like you and like me he is Paul who had not lived and worked with Jesus like you and like me he is one who had not been present at the coming of the spirit at

Pentecost like you and like me and yet Paul is a witness to Jesus just as we are he is the living evidence that the ongoing works of Jesus involve people beyond the original disciples like you and like me and if God can do that with him he can also do it with me and with you so I've looked at one way not to read Acts here is one way to read it read it as a pattern of God's activity among his people read about the ongoing acts of Jesus in the lives of people like you and like me now can you turn to Acts 10 and 11 and again I'm just going to assume that you can read the headings and vaguely see what it's about but it's a very famous story Acts 10 and 11 is about the conversion of Cornelius the Gentile now most of us let me say do not really understand the significance of

Acts 10 and 11 you see we don't understand what it was like to be Jewish being Jewish was being one part of one of the oldest nations on earth it was part of being a nation with a history that stretched back thousands of years that stretched back to a time when the God of all the earth looked on the nations of the earth and as he looked he chose one of them he chose one man and all his descendants and he made them his special people and he surrounded them with commandments and walls that hemmed them in and kept outside influence out although not really they let it sneak in he built a wall around his people and he protected them as he protected no other nation he gave them distinctive laws and distinctive privileges he was their God and they were his people and they knew it and they exalted in it in the

New Testament times the Jews had been on the receiving end of centuries of persecution because of this status and because of their glorying in it people had exiled them they had punished them they had tortured them in horrific ways Jews were considered strange by every other nation on earth and they themselves considered themselves to be God's own people they were separate from everyone else unlike everyone else they were insiders and everyone was outsiders else was outsiders those outsiders Paul says in Ephesians were without God and without hope in the world God God acts to change all of this he tells his leading apostle to make an illegal visit to a Gentile soldier called Cornelius and Peter tells Cornelius about Jesus and he preaches the gospel to him

Cornelius believes and God responds by giving Cornelius and his household the Holy Spirit in exactly the same way that he had done with Jews exactly the same way same signs same responses and the Jews are flabbergasted they just cannot believe it and so they call Peter for a little bit of cross examination in chapter 11 and he asked them they ask him to tell them exactly what happened and he does and the Jews are still flabbergasted but they cannot deny that God has been at work and so they accept it and let me tell you this is the most incredible all of a sudden the world has changed at this moment the world has changed no longer is the world split into Jews and non Jews from now on the world is split into those who know

[38 : 42] Jesus and those who don't those who have the Holy Spirit and those who don't those who are Christians and those who are not racial barriers are gone social barriers are a thing of the past sexual barriers as far as God is concerned no longer exist Christ Christ has become the great leveler of all people and people like you and me who were previously without God and without hope in the world can be friends with God through Jesus we can have intimate fellowship with God through Jesus and call him the Hebrew equivalent of dad Abba father this is what Acts is about it is about God fulfilling his promise to make it possible for the whole world to be related to him you see that is why Genesis begins not with Israel not with chapter 12 of Genesis but with chapter 1 with all people because that's where

God is going to finish with all people not with a select group it is about the great news of Jesus going to all people of all societies of all social classes of all sexual groupings and of them being on a level playing field as far as God is concerned it is revolutionary we don't understand how revolutionary it is because our society is built on certain Christian values that have now sort of filtered up into the surface but they were brought into the world by Christian faith you see Acts is a great story it is a story that involves me it involves you it's a story that's going on even today here is another clue for reading Acts read it in the light of God's great gospel plan begun before all ages culminating with all people in all places who embrace Jesus through the gospel okay what I want to do now is look at the end of

Acts so we're on the home straight now Acts 28 but actually to understand Acts 28 you need to read Acts 16 to 8 so just have a look keep your finger in both places if you can Acts 16 to 8 at 28 Acts 16 to 8 Jesus is giving our final instructions to his disciples we'll have a look at this in more depth next week or on Sunday his command to them is that they are to be witnesses in Jerusalem Judea Samaria and the ends of the earth they are in other words to testify about Christ everywhere and that is and the story of Acts is the story of how they are given the spirit in order to accomplish this it is the story of how the spirit drives them to speak to true blue Jews then to Greek speaking Jews then to Samaritans and Jewish outcasts then to Gentiles and women and disciples of John the Baptist and

Acts 28 tells us where all of this ends up for Paul arrives Rome beyond Jerusalem and on to Rome and there in Rome he follows his usual custom he speaks to Jews first and as usual some are converted by or convinced by what he says others are far from convinced others resist and so Paul states his program he will go to the Gentiles and they will listen to him and on that note the book of Acts ends rather abruptly and there's been so much ink spilt on why it finishes this way it ends abruptly though I think because the continuing acts of Jesus which he performs by his Holy Spirit through the apostles and through believers like Paul the apostle continues and it continues as

Paul boldly preaches the kingdom of God and teaches about Jesus and it continues as the gospel goes from Rome to the four corners of the earth it continues as the gospel goes to Spain and to England and from England it comes to Australia and from Australia it goes to the South Pacific and it comes even to Melbourne it continues as it comes to you and to me and to our neighbourhood it continues as it goes from me and from you to all our friends as God works through his word about his son and the spirit of his son so the acts of the apostles goes on but as this work goes on we would do well to learn from those who forged the way we could learn from those who have gone before us that is why we are going to study Acts for this next month to see what happened with those who went before us in many ways so we could learn from it we could learn from their triumphs and learn from their mistakes and to work out how we should continue to work alongside

[44:13] God and his son in our day so make sure you come along in these coming weeks and hear what we explore we're only going to get to chapter 15 so I have to come back in a couple of years and do the rest 16 to 28 but it was like cutting out my heart trying to work out what we could not include and what we could include and I decided in the end that we'd only go halfway so make sure you come along and hear what we do you'll hear great things I've said this first talk is not rich in application because I needed to set the groundwork for what we're doing but you'll be challenged to be part of acts you will grow in your understanding of what it means to be a Christian see I think John Christ was right we are in for a rich feast with this book so that in mind I'm quite happy to open up for any questions people might have you can if you've got a loud voice you can stay where you are if you've got any questions otherwise you can come to the mic

I've worked you hard tonight but thank you for sticking with me any questions only takes one going going gone David's going to come and lead us in prayer good hug walk to Detacker you