



ACTS: LifeGroup Leader Overview

April 2026

Acts is the story of the early Church, which bears witness to a key principle of God's Kingdom: ordinary men and women are the tools of God's extraordinary work through the power of the Holy Spirit. For the next few months, we're chasing the answer to this one big question: *How does the unstoppable Spirit of God advance the mission of Jesus through ordinary people like us?*

As every generation of the Church has sought to answer this question, Christians have leaned on the foundation laid for us in Acts 2:42-47 (NLT).

“42All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.

43A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. 44And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. 45They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. 46They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— 47all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.”

In verse 42, Luke gives us four key functions of the Church: Teaching, Fellowship, Meals together, Prayer. Throughout the next four months of our study through Acts, consider incorporating each of these functions with your LifeGroup either during group time, or in addition. Here are some suggestions:

Teaching:

- Attend John Dickson’s Dream Disciple Formation Session or live podcast interview. [See below.](#)
- Listen to a podcast or watch a Biblical Documentary.

Fellowship:

- Do something fun together: hike at Asbury Woods, Seawolves game, picnic at Presque Isle,...
- Serve somewhere together. Check out serverie.com or any of the non-profits in Erie.

Meals together:

- Go out to eat together, or all bring your favorite food to share.
- Plan a time to celebrate the Lord’s Supper together. ([Here are some tips](#))

Prayer

- Plan a dedicated meeting to praying for each other using ACTS or PRAY.
- Attend one of the Acts Community Prayer Nights on 5/31, 6/28, 7/26, and 8/30 together.



Dr. John Dickson

Dr. John Dickson is an Australian writer, speaker, academic and public advocate for the Christian faith. He currently teaches at Wheaton College, IL, hosts the popular "Undeceptions" podcast and "The First Hymn" documentary film. A New Testament professor of Pastor Sarah, Dr. Dickson is coming to Grace the weekend of May 30-31. Join us for one or all of the following:

Saturday, May 30th, 9:00am-12:00pm: Dream Disciple Formation Session at Grace Harborcreek
How Christianity Won the World: Lessons from the Early Church

This seminar will draw on Dr. Dickson's research on the expansion of Christianity in the ancient Christian world, providing insights for today as we seek to reach a post-Christian world.

Saturday May 30th, 6:00-7:30pm:

Pastor Derek and Dr. Dickson will record a podcast interview live at Grace McKean in the Commons. Members of the audience will be able to submit questions.

Sunday, May 31st, 9:00am and 11:00am: Dr. Dickson will be preaching live at Grace McKean in the Worship Center.

Sermon Title: *How the Church Changes the World*

Links for more info:

<https://www.johndickson.org/>

<https://undeceptions.com/>

<https://www.thefirsthymnmovie.com/>



ACTS: How to Celebrate the Lord's Supper

April 2026

Supplies needed: Bread or Crackers, Grape Juice, Cups

1. Read Scripture.

- a. **Say:** "Let's take a few moments to read about the Lord's Supper together."
- b. **Do:** Read one (or more) of the passages about the Lord's Supper: [Matthew 26:26-30](#), [Mark 14:22-26](#), [Luke 22:14-23](#), [1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#)

2. Set the Tone.

- a. **Say:** "As we pass the elements, each person will have a chance to share. What's shared here stays here. I'll go first to help us get started. Take a couple of minutes to reflect on these questions. How have you seen Jesus sustain you this past year? Where have you experienced Christ's forgiveness in your life this year?"
- b. **Do:** Allow a few minutes of reflection for people to think about their answers.

3. Pass the Bread.

- a. **Do:** As the bread is passed and each person takes a piece, have each person answer the question.
- b. **Say:** "As you take the bread, share: how have you seen Jesus sustain you this past year?"
- c. **Do:** After each person has shared and has a piece of bread in their hands, pray a blessing over the bread, thanking Jesus for sustaining us.
- d. **Say:** "The body of Christ broken for you, do this in remembrance of him." Then eat the bread together.

4. Pass the Cup

- a. **Do:** As the individual cups are passed out, have each person answer the question.
- b. **Say:** "As you take the cup, share: where have you experienced Christ's forgiveness in your life this year?"
- c. **Do:** Have the person to the right/left pray for that individual.
- d. **Say:** Once everyone has shared, "The blood of Christ poured out for you, do this in remembrance of him." Drink the cup together.

5. Close and Debrief

- a. **Do:** Close in prayer and allow space for brief reflection, especially if this is new for the group.
Say: "Let's close our time in prayer. If this was a new experience, feel free to share what it was like for you."



ACTS: Week 1 Introduction

The Unstoppable Acts of the Holy Spirit

Pastor Derek

April 26, 2026

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- Let's do a Sunny/Stormy check in. Think for a minute and share if you'd like:
 - o Sunny: "I'm grateful for..."
 - o Stormy: "I'm burdened by..."

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

- Consider your answer to the big question, "**How does the unstoppable Spirit of God advance the mission of Jesus through ordinary people like us?**"
 - o Share an example of an "ordinary person" you've seen the Spirit of God use to advance the mission of Jesus.
- The book of Acts can be broken into 3 sections. Ask a couple of people to quickly peruse each section and report back something that everyone can anticipate learning:
 - o The Church is Born: Acts 1-7
 - o The Gospel Breaks Barriers: Acts 8-12
 - o The Mission Expands: Acts 13-28
- Is anyone excited about studying the book of Acts? Why?
- What intimidates you about studying this book?

MY CHAIR: This tool helps us establish regular rhythms of slowing down and spending time with God.

Walk through the tool together and discuss how you can support each other in finding your chair.

- The LEGS of the chair help you make a good plan: WHERE will you meet with God? WHEN will you meet with God? WHAT will you do? WHO will you share with?
- The SEAT of the chair reminds you to read the Word of God. As you read, ask 4 questions: Who is God? What is God doing? Who are we? What will I do about it?
- The BACK of the chair reminds you to pray. PRAY stands for: Praise; Repent; Ask; Yield.

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

- Make a plan for finding your CHAIR through the Acts series.
- [Whoisgrace.com/acts](https://whoisgrace.com/acts) has additional resources: Derek's daily podcast, reading plans, more



ACTS: Week 2

Finding Your Purpose in God's Unstoppable Mission

Pastor Derek

May 3, 2026

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- Check in with each other on how your Chair time is going.

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

- Let's imagine we're followers of Jesus. We've been with him for years. We were devastated by his death and shocked by his resurrection. We're standing on a hillside with Him... Let's read [Acts 1:1-11](#).
 - o Consider your excitement that Jesus is risen! Jesus is King! Now read Acts 1:4-7. How do you feel about "waiting"? Do you understand what you're waiting for?
 - o Read Acts 1:8 again. This is the blueprint for what will unfold in the whole book. But at this moment, no one knows that. What do you think about the idea of being a "witness"?
 - o Read [Isaiah 43:10-13](#). What is our role in being a "witness"? What is God's role?
 - o Read Acts 1:9-11. Jesus ascends and you remain. What might be going through your minds?
- To what degree do you look forward to Jesus' return? (from "life is good and I don't even think about it" to "I pray 'come, Lord Jesus' every day.")
- Paul wrestles with wanting to be with Jesus and life here on Earth before his return. Read [Philippians 1:21-26](#). How can we be both excited about Jesus coming again AND eager to advance the mission of Jesus right here, right now?

EASY/BEST: We often settle for "easy" when Jesus calls us to what is "best."

- What would have been the easy thing for some of Jesus' followers to do after His ascension? What was the best thing they could do?
- Is there an area of your life right now where you've chosen easy over best? If you are willing, share that area with the group and encourage each other to take a step toward the "best."

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

- What is God saying to you about your Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8)? Who are some people in those areas Jesus is drawing you to?
- What are you going to do about it? "I will..."



ACTS: Week 3

How to Make Godly Decisions

Pastor Derek

May 10, 2026

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- What's the most ridiculous or overthought decision you've ever made?
- What are some of the hardest decisions you have ever had to make? How did you decide? What was the outcome? What would you do differently if you had to make that decision again?

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

Read: [Acts 1:12-26](#)

Questions:

- What reasons does Peter give for replacing Judas, and what Scriptures does he reference?
- What were the criteria for identifying candidates for a new Apostle?
- What does this passage suggest about the role of Scripture in making decisions?
- What do we learn about the role of prayer in decision-making from the group's actions? (How does their prayer in verses 24–25 shape or guide the final choice?)
- Why do you think the disciples used casting lots after prayer, and what does that reveal about their trust in God's control over decisions? (What might this tell us about human responsibility versus trusting God with outcomes?)

Read: [Proverbs 11:14](#) and [15:22](#), [Psalm 119:105](#), [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#), and [James 1:5](#)

- Based on Acts 1:12-26 and the passages we just read suggest a step-by-step process for godly decision making. (You may also choose to review the steps presented in this week's sermon)
- Which steps do you find natural for you and which steps have you found to be harder?

Discerning God's Voice Tool: Review the Discerning God's Voice Tool with the group. What is one decision you're currently facing, and how could you approach it differently in light of this tool and the passages we studied?

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

- What is God saying to you? Ask Him to reveal any area of your life that you need to follow Him more closely.
- What are you going to do about it? Take time in the next few days to write down your response to Jesus' invitation. What are you leaving behind? What are you walking toward? "I will..."



ACTS: Week 4

Tapping Into Real Spiritual Power-The Holy Spirit Arrives

Pastor Derek

May 17, 2026

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- If you could have one power to help others, what would it be?

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

Read: [Acts 2:1-13](#), [Acts 1:8](#), [Jeremiah 31:33](#), [Ezekiel 36:26-27](#)

Questions:

- Quick facts about Pentecost: 1. *Pentecost is Jewish festival 50 days after Passover.* 2. *Jews from many nations traveled to Jerusalem for it.* 3. *It celebrated first fruits of harvest and God's provision.* 4. *It was associated with God giving the Law at Sinai.* What are some possible reasons that God chose this day for the giving of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the gospel mission?
- Imagine yourself as one of the people in the room on the day of Pentecost. What are you feeling? Based on your own personality, how are you reacting?
- What does this passage reveal about the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering believers? Why do you think the Spirit's coming is accompanied by these visible and audible signs?
- What do the different reactions of the crowd (amazement, confusion, mocking) reveal about how people respond to God's work? What does this suggest about the nature of sharing the gospel?
- How do you rely on the Holy Spirit when it comes to sharing your faith or making spiritual decisions? What might it look like to depend on Him more intentionally?
- How do you typically respond when people react differently to your faith—whether with interest, confusion, or skepticism? What can you learn from this passage about staying faithful in those moments?
- Read [1 Corinthians 12:4-11](#) - What are possible ways the Holy Spirit could be working in us or around us? How can you be more aware of what he might be doing?

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

- What is God saying to you? Ask Him to reveal any area of your life that you need to follow Him more closely.
- What are you going to do about it? Take time in the next few days to write down your response to Jesus' invitation. What are you leaving behind? What are you walking toward? "I will..."



ACTS: Week 5

Finding Hope After You Have Blown It

Pastor Derek

May 24, 2026

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- Recall and briefly share your favorite movie or book where failure or difficult circumstances became a point of personal growth.

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

- Transformation happens in many ways, sometimes it all starts with a name. Read [John 1:42](#) & [Matthew 16:18](#). Why was Simon's name changed?
- Let's examine Peter's journey up to this point:
 - o Conviction of denial of Jesus. Read [Matthew 26:69-75](#).
 - o Repentance and restoration from Jesus. Read [John 21:15-19](#).
 - o Peter's Holy Spirit led sermon, read [Acts 2:14-41](#)
 - o How do you see Peter transformed through his conviction, repentance, and then receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit which empowers boldness?
- Which of these 3 truths from the sermon really hit home for you and why?
 1. God planned your rescue before you needed rescuing (vs 14-24)
 - a. Share one of your memorable failures. How did it transform you more into God's likeness?
 2. The cross that condemns you is the same cross that saves you (vs 25-36)
 - a. Explore out loud how the cross that convicts produces "surrender rather than self-hatred" and why this truth impacted you?
 3. The invitation still stands (vs 37-41). We have the opportunity, like Peter, to share with others the invitation to Jesus.
- **Tool:** Review the [Tell My Story Tool](#). Encourage each other once again to put your salvation story into words. What will you be adding after hearing Peter's, and why?

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

- Are there any sins you are sitting comfortably in today? If you feel convicted, act on it with repentance and receive the gift of forgiveness – putting it behind you.



- With whom is God putting on your heart to share your story? I will share the story of Peter's transformation and mine with _____ by the end of the week.



ACTS: Week 6

How the Church Changes the World

Dr. John Dickson

May 31, 2026

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- Consider your day-to-day tasks. Which machine/device do you believe has changed the world the most? Which would you miss the most if you couldn't use it again? (examples: refrigerator, washing machine, air conditioning, cell phone, email, Microsoft Word/Excel, computer mouse...)

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

- In Acts 2:41 it says "so those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about 3,000 souls." With that in mind, read [Acts 2:42-47](#).
 - o "They" are the 3,000 new believers plus the 120 (Acts 1:15); a blend of "old timers" who had followed Jesus when He was alive and new believers.
 - o Name the activities/functions happening among those 3,000+ believers in Acts 2:42-47.
 - o Imagine the logistics: Would they have been able to meet in one home? Who was feeding them? What were they selling and giving? Were some of them wealthy and some of them poor? Etc.
- How did the message of Jesus Christ partnered with these particular activities/functions of the early church begin a movement that changed the world?
- How might a LifeGroup be a similar gathering to what was happening in the early church?
- Which activities/functions of your LifeGroup or the church are strengths?
- Which activities/functions of your LifeGroup or the church are weaknesses? How might these be strengthened?

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

- Does someone in the group have a need that we can help meet? (Help with childcare so mom and dad can have a date night; a ride to a Dr.'s appointment so they don't have to be there alone; prayer; help supporting a neighbor in need, etc.)
- Check out the Acts Overview page at the beginning of this guide. How can we plan to practice some of these activities within our group this season? Put some dates on the calendar.