Acts*

Acts 1:1-9 (1) The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,
(2) Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:
(3) To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:
(4) And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.
(5) For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.
(6) When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?
(7) And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.
(8) But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
(9) And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.
The book of Acts picks up the story of Jesus and His followers where the 4 gospels leave off, summarizing the growth of the Christian church in the first century. From the very first verse it is clear the book of Acts is a second part of a two part narrative. The book of Acts is universally acknowledged to have been written by Luke, the author of the Gospel of Luke, beloved physician and companion of the Apostle Paul. Luke addressed his gospel and the Acts of the Apostles to

“Theophilus,” and it is essentially a continuing record of the things that “Jesus began both to do and teach." Although Jesus had returned to heaven, He sent His Holy Spirit to indwell, guide and empower His disciples as they were to scatter around the world preaching His saving gospel.
Little is known of Theophilus, to whom Luke's Gospel and the book of Acts are dedicated. He was probably a Roman official of high rank, as indicated by the title “most excellent.” His name means “lover of God.” It is not known who he was, all-tho it is possible he may have been one of Luke’s converts in Philippi or Antioch. It may also be—as was often the case of the person to whom a book was dedicated—that he bore the expense of publication by having copies made for the many congregations of the Churches that were being established at that time.
In the 40 days between His resurrection and ascension, Jesus appeared no less than 10 times to His followers to banish forever from their minds any doubt as to His continued existence as a living self-conscious rational being. What a wonderful experience, in those 40 days, to have seen, talked with, and eaten with Jesus in His actual crucified, glorified body, as He appeared seemingly out of nowhere, and disappeared through closed doors. These appearances now reach their climax with the blessing of His uplifted hands, He rises up, and disappears into the clouds. To say these things that happened to our Lord following His crucifixion are miraculous, is an understatement. However, atheists, agnostics and false prophets clinging to a secular philosophy that reject religious faith and worship are walking about seeking whom they may devour. They are seeking out "ways of man" by which they purpose to cast doubt. But there is a difference in philosophy. We believe in miracles, which is an effect or event manifesting the work of our benevolent God. Magic, on the other hand, is the art of producing a desired effect, but are nothing more than illusions (see Rev 13:11-14).

Our God is not an illusionist, we learn in Paul's epistle to the Romans that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Therefore we can have faith in all things that are written concerning Jesus Christ, including this miracle;
Luke 24:30-35 (30) And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.
(31) And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and **he vanished out of their sight**.
(32) And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?
(33) And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,
(34) Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.
(35) And they told what things were done in the way, and how **he was known of them in breaking of bread.**
Now this happened on the first day of the week. And astonishingly, it was by this act of "breaking bread", that Jesus become known to them. Before the bread was broken, Jesus was unknown, He was a stranger to them. The brethren at Troas followed this same example of breaking bread on the first day of the week and the Christian Church has followed this same example unto this day. Therefore it should be known by all, that Christ is unknown by an unbroken loaf. Listen to this; {For there is one flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his blood which is shed for us is one. One loaf is broken for all, and one cup is distributed among them all." (Anti-Nicene Fathers Vol 1 Page 81)}
{And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president

verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings,according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each. (Anti-Nicene Fathers Vol 1 page 196)}

Now one thing of interest in this quote is the mention of the day called Sunday. The Anti-Nicene writings cover a period of time up to the year 325 A.D.. Christians came together on the first day of the week to partake of communion. It was a scriptural practice. Constantine did not change the worship to the first day of the week as some contend. Listen to the word. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come (1Cor 16:2). Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils (Mark 16:9) . *The first day of the week is called "the Lord's day" because that is the day of His resurrection. According to Jewish tradition, Messiah will come at Passover to bring a redemption like unto the redemption brought through Moses. A generation before the Temple was destroyed, One who observed the feast in that upper room "took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them, saying,* this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me (Luke 22:19). *The ultimate redemption did come at Passover. Because of Messiah's body broken as the sacrificed lamb, the wrath of God "passes over" those who have redemption in His blood through baptism into Him. Christ established His covenant and by it obedient believers are saved. Turn to;*

Acts 2:36-41 (36) Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

(37) Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their

heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?
(38) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
(39) For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.
(40) And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.
(41) Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.
As already observed, the book of Acts was dedicated to Theophilus. His name is a clue that links the book of Acts to the gospel of Luke. In Acts the Christian community was established which later became known as the Church of Christ, it's prophecy is stated in;
Matthew 16:16-18 (16) And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.
(17) And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.
(18) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will **build my church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
In the gospels the promise to build His Church was made, in Acts the promise was fulfilled, the Church was established; Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved (Acts 2:47). *Paul to the Romans encouraged them to:* Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you (Romans 16:16). *One point which must be understood is that the word "Church" is not actually a name as such. Rather, it is simply a description of those people who are called*

out of the world, and belong to Christ.
IN THE GOSPELS HOW CHRIST COMMANDED BAPTISM TO HIS DISCIPLES, BEFORE HIS ASCENSION
Matthew 28:16-20 (16) Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.
(17) And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.
(18) And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.
(19) **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost**:
(20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
Mark 16:14-16 (14) Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.
(15) And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
(16) **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved**; but he that believeth not shall be damned.
IN ACTS HOW THE APOSTLES EXECUTED THIS COMMAND OF CHRIST TO TEACH AND BAPTIZE, AFTER HIS ASCENSION
Act 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
Verse 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.
Acts 8:12-13 (12) But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

(13) Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.
Verses 36-38, (36) And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?
(37) And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
(38) And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.
Acts 9:18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.
Acts 10:48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.
Acts 16:14-15 (14) And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.
(15) And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.
Acts 18:8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.
The Acts of the Apostles is the fifth book of the New Testament, written between AD 70 and AD 90. Acts is an account of the early preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, of baptizing believers, of the growth of the primitive Christian community, and of the spread of the Christian message. It covers the period from the Ascension of Christ and the Pentecost, to the visit of St. Paul to Rome, where he was

placed under house arrest. Speeches constitute about 1/3rd of the book, and the early sermons of Peter summarize the message as understood by the author of Acts. Five of the key ideas are;
(1) that Christ fulfills the promises of the Old Testament,
(2) the Church is established,
(3) salvation comes through him
(4) the Christian community is the new chosen people.
(5) God's people became known by a new name.
And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch (Acts 11:26). *The Acts of the Apostles is not an isolated writing, but rather an integral part in a well-ordered series. Acts presupposes its readers to know the Gospels; for it continues the Gospel narrative of the Four Evangelists that were well acquainted with the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ. Of the four, Mark is the only one who gives a tentative effort of the subsequent history, and he condenses his account into one brief sentence*: And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen (Mark 16:20). *However, the Acts of the Apostles takes up the narrative at this point and records concisely the mighty events which were wrought by the Holy Ghost through chosen human agents. It is a condensed record of the fulfillment of the promises of Jesus Christ. The Evangelist recorded Christ's promises which He made to the disciples, regarding the establishment of the Church and its mission (Matthew 16), the gift of the Holy Ghost (John 14), the plan of salvation (Mark 16), and calling of the gentiles (Matthew 28). The Acts of the Apostles records the fulfillment of all the things that Jesus began both to do and to teach. The history in Acts begins at Jerusalem and ends at Rome, and along the way there were untold numbers of*

baptized believers. Acts ended on a positive note. Turn with me to;
Acts 28:30-31 (30) And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him,
(31) Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.
The book of Acts is a book of history as well as a book of missions and evangelism. Its numerous references to cities of the first-century Roman world, to customs of the day, to political officials at various levels, often by name, and to various dates and events, leave the book open to detailed investigation and criticism in respect to accuracy. Contrary to expectations of the higher critics, archaeological research by Sir William Ramsay and others have confirmed its accuracy at every turn and in full detail. There is no longer any legitimate doubt as to its historical accuracy. But of course, causing doubt does not have to be legitimate. The devil will use the offices of atheists, agnostics and science falsely so called to further his agenda of doubt in the God of Heaven.
Atheist--*is a person who denies or disbelieves in the existence of a supreme being, or God.*
Agnostic*--is a person who holds that the existence of the ultimate cause and the essential nature of things are unknown or that knowledge is limited to experience. So it comes down to this, an atheist believes there is no God and an agnostic doesn't know or is not certain. What shall be said of these people?* Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ (Col 2:8). *Turn with me to;*
1Timothy 6:20-21 (20) O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:
(21) Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.
Acts 20:28-30 (28) Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to

all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
(29) For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.
(30) Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.
The devil has little time remaining and in his furry is becoming bolder. How much time is remaining? Only God knows. What about the rapture? It has been foretold many times only to fail every time. We may not live to witness the coming of Christ, but we will stand before Him on judgment day. Living forever will not be an option at judgment, it is an eternal decision you make today by faith in Christ that is the effect of belief in His word. It is only those who first believe the testimony of God that effects faith unto repentance of their sins, confess their faith in Christ as the Son of God, and because of faith are baptized into His death for remission of sins. They only have the full and explicit testimony of God assuring them of pardon. This is the gospel message. Need prayer for other reasons, in either case come while we persuade with song. The Spirit and the bride say, come.

This message approved by
Jack Warford
a minister for Christ

Da Vinci Code Truth Home emperor constantine Is the Bible true? Emperor Constantine

Emperor Constantine - did he create our Bible?
by Garry Williams, Ph.D. , Tutor in Church History and Doctrine at Oak Hill Theological College in London.

The Da Vinci Code Claims that Emperor Constantine created the New Testament canon - the list of books to be counted as Christian Scripture alongside the Old Testament - and rejected thousands of alternative texts by the Gnostics. Brown writes: 'The fundamental irony of Christianity! The Bible, as we know it today, was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great' (p. 313).

Emperor Constantine was born after Lists of New Testament books existed
The claim that Constantine created the canon is not true. Emperor Constantine did ask bishop Eusebius of Caesarea to have fifty copies of the New Testament reproduced for the new imperial capital at Constantinople. But the work of collating the New Testament books had been done over the preceding centuries. The evidence for this is abundant. The most famous documentary example is a piece of writing known as the Muratorian fragment. This fragment dates from the end of the second century and is named after the Italian scholar who first published it in 174. It is a list of books recognized by the church: four Gospels (though the first two are missing due to damage to the fragment), the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen epistles of Paul; three epistles of John; Jude; the Apocalypses of John and Peter. Significantly, the Muratorian canon rejects Gnostic works by Valentinus and others. This is important for showing that Brown is wrong, because it proves that as early as the end of the second century the church was already denying the truth of Gnosticism, and the canon of Scripture was being formed.

Emperor Constantine - Did he remove books from the Bible?
The Da Vinci Code Claims that the four Gospels were selected by Constantine from eighty others. Brown writes: 'Constantine

commissioned and financed a new Bible, which omitted those gospels that spoke of Christ's human traits and embellished those gospels that made Him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up, and burned' (p. 317). Or again: 'More than eighty gospels were considered for the New Testament, and yet only a relative few were chosen for inclusion' (p. 313).

This is wrong. Many early Christian texts written well before Constantine's time say that there are and can be only four authoritative Gospels. Irenaeus, who died in around AD200, over a century before Constantine's reign, writes this in his great work Against the Heresies:

It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are. For, since there are four zones of the world in which we live, and four principal winds, while the church is scattered throughout all the world [...] it is fitting that she should have four pillars [...]. From which fact, it is evident that the Word, [...] who was manifested to men, has given us the Gospel under four aspects, but bound together by one Spirit. (III. xi. 8; Ante-Nicene Fathers, 1:428)

This may seem like a strange argument to us - four winds so four Gospels - but the point is clear. There is no evidence that there were ever anywhere near eighty Gospels, and the selection was made many years before Emperor Constantine was even born.

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