The Autopoietic Church: Inter-textual Analysis of "The *Acts of the Apostles*"

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This paper is an inter-textual analysis of the *Acts of the Apostles* in a metaphorical context, using Morgan's contemporary cybernetic metaphor of autopoiesis. The paper examines ecclesiastical communications and consciousness in the context of a self-referential autopoietic social system. Further, the recursive communication continuum of kerygmatic and prophetic utterances in the *Acts of the Apostles* is categorized through inter-text and meta-text analyses. The representative elemental features of autopoietic organization such as self-renewing and self-creating structuration, self-referencing environment, internally determined social practices, simultaneously created community norms, transformative symbolisms, and a unified organizational identity are also examined and applied to the early church. Further, the benefits of autopoietic organizational structure for the early church in a persecutive political environment are explicated with ramifications for the sustainability of the church in modern times.

Paradoxically, Morgan's (2006) contemporary cybernetic metaphor on the autopoietic organization is demonstratively descriptive of the early Christian church as delineated in the *Acts of the Apostles*. Buffeted by persecutory environmental pressures in political reaction to apostolic proclamation and prophecy, the early church benefited from the closed system of relations reflected in the characteristically autopoietic elements of autonomy and circularity inherent in the triune God-head. Indeed, exceptional ecclesiastical communications and consciousness were "modes of meaning-based reproduction" (Geyer & van der Zouwen, 1992, "Sociocybernetics," para. 20) in this self-referential autopoietic social system. Further, the Christian church in a recursive communication continuum exemplifies representative autopoietic features of self-renewing and self-creating structuration, self-referencing environment, internally determined social practices, simultaneously created community norms, transformative symbolisms, and a unified organizational identity of itself as an endlessly re-invented social system (Luhmann, 1990), which has persisted through the ages because of its timelessness. In the kerygmatic and prophetic utterances of the apostles, the autopoietic church was pregenerated, propagated, and perpetuated.

In the autopoietic model, humans are no longer "components of social systems" but systems are "constituted by interrelations between humans" (Goldspink, 2003, "The Contributions and Overall Themes," para. 7). For Luhmann (1995), those interrelations

are expressed as communications, that is, "unity of information, utterance and understanding" (p. 203). Seen as much more than a compendium of individuals, roles, and acts, Luhmann's autopoietic organization is a constant dialogue of expectations (Geyer & van der Zouwen, 1992; Goldspink, 2003). Tellingly, the inter-textual macropatterns identified by DeSilva (2004) in the *Acts of the Apostles* has a decided dependence on utterances both past, present and future– most often in the form of kerygma (Greek for proclamation) and prophecy:

A.   These events are foretold in Scripture

B.   Jesus is a "Prophet like Moses"

C.   Jesus dies for us according to the scriptures

D.   Jesus is buried and raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

E.   Jesus appears to the disciples, who will become "witnesses" (p.352)

Indeed, if we are to look at the complete book of Acts, references to proclamation (kerygma) and prophecy abound (see Appendix). These autopoietic utterances are as Luhmann observes more than just vocal expressions; they are "the irreducible final element of an 'emergent event'" (Luhmann 1984/1999, p. 196 as cited in Brandhoff, 2009, p. 308), "constituting a social system, which is a closed network of communication processes that recursively engender each other" to produce an "emergent reality sui generis" (Brandhoff, p. 308). In application to the early church, these communication processes (Table 1) are indicative of a new spiritual consciousness of the concept of salvation through which belief is expressed and the church is continuously re-created "time and again" (Brandhoff, p. 308). The church as an organization is established by "enclosed sequences of autopoietic communications" (Brandhoff, p. 310).

Table 1:
 Compendium of Autopoietic Communication Processes in the *Acts of the Apostles*

Type of Utterance	Themes/Purposes
Exhortation	Encouragement; Comfort; Repentance; Edification
Prayer	Thanksgiving; Petition; Laying on of Hands; Direction; Guidance; Healing; Repentance
Praise	Worship; Rejoicing; Singing
Preaching	Kingdom of God; Resurrection; Gift of Holy Spirit
Proclamation	Administration/Structuration (Church); Belief; Baptism of Holy Spirit; Healing; Salvation; Fear of God; Judgment;

	Forgiveness of Sins; Rescue; Repentance; Correction; Edification; Raised from the Dead
Prophecy	Calling; Warning; Second Coming of Christ; Select of New Apostle; All the Prophets (David, Moses, Joshua, etc.); Judgment; Provision; Rescue; Direction; Guidance; Repentance; Correction
Speaking in Tongues	Gift of the Holy Spirit
Teaching	Expounding on the Scriptures; Resurrection; Debate
Witness	Testifying of the Resurrection; Salvation; Works of God; Testimony of Healing

(See the Appendix for further information).

Within the text of the *Acts of the Apostles*, the processes of communication take on different meanings, purposes, and themes. Some utterances are those for teaching, prayer, praise, or witness. Some communications have the function of church administration: the distribution of judgment (e.g., Ananias and Sapphira), the facilitation of converts and leadership (laying on of hands), discipleship, guidance and direction. Purposeful proclamations facilitate healing, baptism, salvation, faith, belief, obedience (e.g., Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch). Themes are wide ranging including resurrection and persecution (e.g., the stoning of Stephen, Acts 7; the rescuing of Peter and John from prison, Acts 12), with recorded communications for and against the propagation of the gospel and indications of the propagation of the gospel through persecution (Acts 8:4; Acts 14 – scattering led to dispersal of teachers). Utterances inspired the fear of God (Acts 5 &8), warned of famine (Acts 11:29) and exhorted congregants (Acts 11:20).

Self-Renewing & Self-Creating Structuration

These communication processes, themselves processes of change through agency and determination (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006), were at the heart of the self-renewing and self-creating structuration of the church. As defined by Smith (2013), the church's autopoietic system pattern was not a "network of separate parts" but could "be understood as a whole and as possessing a logic of its own" (p. 246). Smith notes that autopoiesis as a conceptual framework is one of self-production with "the producer being the same thing as the product" and self-organization whereby "the components interact with each other in such a way as to continually reproduce the components and the relationships between them" (p. 246). Likewise, through inter-textual analysis we observe that organizing and guiding come from the Holy Spirit through human agency as in the casting of lots after prayer to determine the new apostle.

Thus, like the autopoietic system, a "living system" as distinguished by Maturana (2002), is one in which "there is no organizing or guiding principle" (p. 9). Maturana noted that autopoiesis "is itself an 'abstraction', a 'metaphor' constructed by an observer to give meaning to the workings of a system that may appear to be participating in its own 'genesis' but is actually 'blind to the consequences to which they give rise'" (Smith, 2003, p. 243). Unlike the allopoietic system of a factory that "takes in materials and uses them to produce something other than itself", the autopoietic system can "maintain itself through its own metabolic processes" (King, et al., 2007, "autopoiesis") with "the aim of such systems ultimately to produce themselves - their own organization and identity is their most important product" (Smith, p. 243). Even the propagation of the gospel, and thus, addition of members to the church, is guided through prophetic instruction and vision from God to Peter and Paul (Acts 13:1-3, 48) to go first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles – a principle not established by men or the traditions of men, but by God. With belief and salvation of all men being the most important "outcome" or "product" of the autopoietic church, the church is truly just adding to itself through belief. Indeed, the autopoietic church "organizes itself without external assistance" (Allaby, 2009, "autopoiesis") and is "a network of processes that simultaneously produce and realize that same network as a unity" through a "nonmaterial and nonmechanical animating force" unlike the systems framework of material efficiency and mechanical causality (Thompson, 1998, "autopoiesis").

Self-Referencing Environment

Regarding the environment of nonmaterial and nonmechanical autopoietic systems, Morgan (2006) makes this observation about Maturana and Varela's innovative model that "challenged the distinctions between an organization and its environment" (p. 243):

> How is it possible to say that living systems such as organisms are autonomous, closed systems? Maturana and Varela argue that it is because living systems strive to maintain an identity by subordinating all changes to the maintenance of their own organization as a given set of relations. They do so by engaging in circular patterns of interaction whereby change in one element of the system is coupled with changes elsewhere, setting up continuous patterns of interaction that are always self-referential. They are self-referential because a system cannot enter into interactions that are not specified in the pattern of relations that define its organization. It interacts with its environment in a way that facilitates its own self-production; its environment is really a part of itself. (Morgan, p. 244)

Further, for Luhmann, as well as, Maturana and Varela, "all non-communicational things and processes belong to the environment" (Goldspink, 2003, "The Contributions and Overall Themes," para. 7; see also, Geyer & van der Zouwen, 2001; Luhmann, 1990). Indeed, in the application of this environmental framework, conflict and dislocations outside of the "self-contained" and "self-moving" (Dictionary of the Social

Sciences, 2002, "autopoiesis") autopoietic church can also be found in the inter-textual analysis of the *Acts of the Apostles* as exemplified in the aberrations to the autopoietic system experienced through Bar-Jesus, the magician, and his mis-application of the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13) and the judgment of Ananias and Sapphira and their lies to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5). Moreover, the persecution of the church is referenced repeatedly in the *Acts of the Apostles* with the political reprisals in direct contraindication with the decree of Jesus and the prophetic utterances of the apostles to preach, teach, and proclaim – exemplified with statements from apostles Paul and Peter such as "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29) and "He commanded us to preach to the people" (Acts 10:37). The autopoietic church's environment is "really a part of itself" and "internally determined," in that, its future members are part of its environment and its interactions with the environment are an attempt "to reproduce itself" (Morgan, 2006 p. 245). Thus, there is a "structural coupling" (Smith, 2013, p. 5) between the church and its environment "as an extension of its own identity" (Morgan, p. 246).

Internally-Determined Social Practices

Moreover, Rempel (1996) notes that a social system is "distinguished from its environment by the use of meaningful social communication," such that the autopoietic system exhibits "a prestructured, internally-developed language and logic to identify and frame environmental events in system-specific terms or modes of understanding" (p. 59). Likewise the early church with its "self-contained internal operations and organizational closure" (Rempel, p. 59) came to display internally-determined social practices.

For example, in Hatch and Cunliff's (2006) overview of social and cultural influences on organization structure, he includes Weber's routinization of charisma, that is, "change in culture originates with the introduction of new ideas by a charismatic leader, but change at the level of everyday life follows the path of the routinization of charismatic influence" (p. 312). Hatch and Cunliff note Weber's inclusion of "how, under extraordinary circumstances including 'suffering, conflicts, or enthusiasm' revolutionary change in world views and their consequent influence on social action occur":

> The genuine prophet, like the genuine military leader, and every true leader in this sense, preaches, creates, or demands new obligations – most typically, by virtue of revelation, oracle, inspiration, or of his own will – which are recognized by the members of the religious, military, or party group because they come from such a source. The revolutionary force of reason works from without: by altering the situations of life and hence its problems, finally in this way changing men's attitudes towards them; or it intellectualizes the individual. Charisma, on the other hand, may effect a subjective or an internal reorientation born out of suffering, conflicts, or enthusiasm. It may then result in a radical alteration of the

central attitudes and directions of action with a completely new orientation of all attitudes toward the different problems of the world. (Weber, 1968/1978, p. 263)

Thus, the prosecutorial political environment in which communication processes for the early church were initiated was reflected in turn by the church's internally-determined social practices, such as prayer (and laying on of hands), praise, preaching, teaching and witness. These social practices, in turn, helped to spread the influence, and thus, the membership of the autopoietic church.

Simultaneously Created Community Norms

In addition to internally-determined social practices, the autopoietic church established community norms which were strengthened by the internal impact of prophetic utterances, which oftentimes inspired the fear of God, and thus, compliance. For instance, Ananias and Sapphira were judged for not engaging with the early church community in the common practice of sharing the revenues from the sale of their property so that no one in the church had a need (Acts 5). However, their non-compliance was particularly highlighted in the early church community through the prophetic utterance of Peter who not only knew through the Holy Spirit that they had withheld some of the proceeds but that they would also be slain by God in the midst of their assembly. Moreover, the death of Herod upon his acceptance of the worship of the people through his "oration" and his consequent condemnation through the angel of the Lord (Acts 12:22) solidified community norms of worship and praise of God. The Sanhedrin also invoked the penalty of death (Deuteronomy 13:6-10) for the continued preaching of the apostles (Acts 5:17-42). The seven sons of the High Priest Sceva also tried to cast out evil spirits; but, Sceva's sons were not believers and thus could not cast out the evil spirits, were overpowered, and fled naked and wounded (Acts 19:13). Such prevalent threat of death, scourging, and other persecution by political authorities and the countervailing pressures of church compliance with belief gave a heightened sense in the early church community of the life-and-death nature of their decisive discourses.

Transformative Symbolisms

Throughout the *Acts of the Apostles*, descriptive communications concerning the resurrection of Jesus were conferred upon believers, who were also endowed with a "new life" upon believing. Also, the symbolic "tongues of fire" (Acts 2: 3) reminiscent of the presence of God at Sinai (Exodus 19:18) in the manifestation of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 further solidified the proclamation of a new covenant. Along with fire, the earthquake in those early days was a sign of divine presence as recorded in the Old Testament (Exodus 19:18; Isaiah 6:4) and of favor in response to corporate prayer. These symbolic images helped to reinforce the continuity of the traditional strengths of the faith while emphasizing new manifestations of the autopoietic church. Moreover, Apostle Luke, the purported author of the *Acts of the*

Apostles, may have used particular symbols such as the earthquakes in the book of Acts to reflect the same symbolism of earthquakes as used by Ovid and Virgil to relate to the Hellenistic world of which they were a part ("Commentary on the *Acts of the Apostles*," n.d.).

Unified Organizational Identity

As an endlessly re-invented social system with transformative symbolisms, the organizational identity, "that which is central, distinctive, and enduring about an organization" and the organizational ideal generated through culture, social norms, and symbolisms, gave "a source of security" and maintained the church as an "object of love" for believers (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006, p. 335). Indeed, identity dynamics and the systemic strengths derived from an autopoietic organization carried the church into the future to face challenges that by its nature made the church sustainable and victorious. From Acts to Revelation, the prophetic proclamations of the early church helped to not only strengthen the church as a whole but also the subsystems of the church in individual cities. As Geyer and van der Zouwen (1992) note: "Especially when several systems try to steer each other, or an outside system, attention is focused on the nature of, and the possibilities for, communication or dialogue between these systems" ("Sociocybernetics," para. 5). As Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) confirm, "behavior and language express and maintain dominant cultural understandings" (p. 274). Further, for Luhmann (1990), the linguistic domain "gives rise to social relations, which in turn are constituted in and through the social domain" (as cited in Goldspink, 2003, "The Contributions and Overall Themes," para. 7). Also, Maturana and Varela emphasize the "emergence of language" as "the meaning structures which arise from communicative acts" and become a part of "functionally autonomous unities" (Goldspink, "The Contributions and Overall Themes," para. 7; see also, Geyer & van der Zouwen, 2001). Varela (1981) made a further qualification: "Such units are autonomous but with an organizational closure that is characterizable in terms of relations such as instructions or linguistic agreement" (p. 38). Mingers (1991 and 1995) added that the concept of autopoiesis "compels us to reconsider the role and nature of communication…" with attention to "the relationship between 'information and meaning' or "the relational characteristic of …self-conscious systems…" (as cited in Goldspink, "The Contributions and Overall Themes," para. 9). Bausch (2002) gives additional insight into the "reproductive" nature of such communications:

> Society is a closed autopoietic system because every communication produces further communications in ever self-reproducing iterations. Luhmann states that autopoietic systems, in their ongoing reproductive processes, make selections that maintain and expand their meaning (their organized complexity). They manage this selection process through a system of graduated expectations that they develop in processes of trial and error, memory, and adaptation. These

expectations increase constraints on individuals AND give them freedom. In modern society, freedom and constraint increase together; the greater the type of constraints (in the form of expectations), the more choice is had by societal members about how to respond to them. (pp. 1-2)

Even the proclamation of Jesus "on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:8, ESV) indicated that the "rock" of Peter's proclamation that Jesus was the Son of God was a communication that carried the intimation of a timeless purpose and a confrontational enemy, that instilled the sense of self-referential community that became the emergent autopoietic church. Indeed, the autopoietic themes of risk and security are intertwined (Bausch, 2002) throughout the *Acts of the Apostles*. However, it is also worth noting that for the autopoietic church, with risk came opportunity and with security came persecution, both of which helped define and also perpetuate the church's unified organizational identity – as is often the case for even the cybernetic organizations of our modern age.

Conclusion

Thus, the Christian church is an organizational exemplification of the sustainability of autopoietic systems as Morgan's metaphor describes. At the heart of the autopoietic church is a continually self-referencing dynamic, the cherished centuries-old kerygmatic and prophetic utterances, which persist amidst persecutory environments. Indeed, the closed system engenders a safely kept compendium of conscious purpose and position through structuration, environment, social practices, community norms, symbolisms, and organizational identity, which are autopoietically self-prescribed and communicatively established. The implications for the continuation of the autopoietic Christian church within a contemporary cybernetic context are profound. With readily identifiable macropatterns in the *Acts of the Apostles*, these inter-textual and meta-textual analyses suggest that the timelessness of ecclesiastical communications is just that – eternally self-reproducing.

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Appendix

Continuum of Communication in the Early Church as Recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles*

Scripture Reference	Key words – Type of Utterance	Theme (Purpose/Content)
Acts 1:1	Teach	Teaching (Jesus)
Acts 1:3	Speaking of the Kingdom of God	Preaching (Jesus)
Acts 1:4	You heard from me	Proclamation (Jesus on baptism of Holy Spirit)
Acts 1:7-8	You shall by my witnesses	Proclamation (Calling)
Acts 1:11	And said (two men in white robes)	Proclamation (Second Coming of Christ)
Acts 1: 16-22	And said (Peter)	Reference to Prophecy & Proclamation (Resurrection); Administration (Placement of new apostle)
Acts 1:24-25	They prayed	Prayer; Administration (Cast lots for new apostle)
Acts 2:4	Began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance	Proclamation (Gift of the Holy Spirit)
Acts 2:6	Heard them speaking in his own language	Proclamation (Gift of the Holy Spirit)
Acts 2:11	We hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God	Proclamation (Gift of the Holy Spirit)
Acts 2:14-36	Lifted up his voice and addressed them (Peter)	Proclamation and Prophecy (Joel and David)
Acts 2:38-29	Said to them (Peter)	Proclamation (Repentance & Gift of Holy Spirit)
Acts 2:40	Testified with many other words and exhorted them, saying	Proclamation (Salvation)
Acts 2:41	Received his word	Proclamation (Baptism and Salvation)
Acts 2:42	Apostles' teaching…prayers	Teaching and Prayer
Acts 2:47	Praising God	Praise
Acts 3:6	Said…in the name of Jesus Christ	Proclamation (Healing)
Acts 3:12-26	He addressed the people (Peter)	Proclamation & Prophecy (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jesus, by the mouth of all the prophets, Moses, Samuel, Abraham, God)
Acts 4:1	Speaking to the people (Peter & John)	Proclamation
Acts 4:2	Teaching the people and Proclaiming	Teaching & Proclaiming (Resurrection)
Acts 4:4	Heard the word	Proclamation (Belief)

Acts 4:8-12	Said to them (Peter)… by the name of Jesus Christ	Proclamation (Salvation)
Acts 4:19-20	Answered them… for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 4:21	All men praised God	Praise (Healing)
Acts 4:23	Reported what the chief priests and elders had said to them (Peter & John)	Persecution
Acts 4:24-30	They lifted their voices together to God and said (Peter & John)…to speak thy word with all boldness	Proclamation & Prophecy (David and Jesus)
Acts 4:31	They had prayed…spoke the word of God with boldness	Prayer; Proclamation (Belief); Prophecy
Acts 4:32	No one said	Proclamation (Possessions in Common)
Acts 4:33	Gave their testimony	Witness (Resurrection)
Acts 5:3-5	Said…heard these words (Peter)	Proclamation (Judgment)
Acts 5:8 - 9	Said to her (Peter)	Proclamation (Judgment)
Acts 5:11	Upon all who heard of these things	Proclamation (Fear of God)
Acts 5:19-20	Said (Angel of the Lord)… speak to the people all the words of this Life.	Proclamation (Preach)
Acts 5:21	When they heard…taught	Teaching
Acts 5:28	Saying...not to teach in this name…filled Jerusalem with your teaching	Teaching
Acts 5:29-31	Answered	Proclamation (Repentance)
Acts 5:32	We are witnesses	Witness (Repentance & Forgiveness of Sins)
Acts 5:35-39	Said to them (Gamaliel, teacher of the law)	Witness (Fear of God)
Acts 5:41	Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name	Persecution
Acts 5:42	Teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ	Teaching & Preaching; Proclamation & Prophecy (Jesus)
Acts 6:2-5	Said…not right that we should give up preaching the word of God…devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word	Persecution, Proclamation and Preaching, Prayer & Teaching
Acts 6:5	What they said pleased the whole	Proclamation (Administration)

	multitude	
Acts 6:6	They prayed	Prayer with Laying on of Hands (Administration)
Acts 6:7	The word of God increased	Proclamation (Discipleship, Faith, Belief, Obedience)
Acts 6:10	The wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke	Proclamation
Acts 6:11	We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God	Proclamation & Persecution (Stephen)
Acts 6:13-14	Set up false witnesses who said…"This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say…	Persecution (of Stephen), Proclamation, Prophecy (Moses and Jesus)
Acts 7:2-53	Stephen said	Testimony, Witness, Prophecy (Abraham, God, Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, David, Solomon, Righteous One)
Acts 7:56	He said (Stephen)	Witness & Proclamation
Acts 7:59-60	He prayed (Stephen)…and cried with a loud voice…and when he had said this,	Witness & Proclamation; Persecution
Acts 8:2	Made great lamentation over him	Persecution & Lament
Acts 8:4	Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word.	Persecution & Preaching
Acts 8:5-6	Proclaimed to them the Christ (Philip)…what was said by Philip, when they heard him	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 8:12	As he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 8:15	Prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit	Prayer (Gift of the Holy Spirit)
Acts 8:16-23	Said to him…(Peter)	Proclamation (Judgment & Repentance, Forgiveness of Sins)
Acts 8:24	Simon answered pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me.	Prayer and Proclamation (Fear of God)
Acts 8:25	Had testified and spoken the word of the Lord…preaching the gospel (Peter & John)	Testimony, Preaching, and Proclamation

Acts 8:26	An angel of the Lord said to Philip	Proclamation (Guidance)
Acts 8:29	The Spirit said to Philip	Proclamation (Direction)
Acts 8:30	Asked (Philip)	Prophecy (Isaiah)
Acts 8:34	The eunuch said to Philip...does the prophet say this, about himself or someone else?	Prophecy & Teaching
Acts 8:35	Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this scripture he told him the good news of Jesus.	Proclamation (Salvation)
Acts 8:40	He preached the gospel to all the towns (Philip)	Preaching
Acts 9:4	Heard a voice saying to him…why do you persecute me? (Jesus)	Persecution
Acts 9:5	He said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting; but rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."	Proclamation, Persecution, Direction, Guidance
Acts 9:10-16	The Lord said to him in a vision.."Go…I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." (Ananias)	Proclamation (Guidance, Direction); Persecution
Acts 9:17	Laying his hands on him he said (Ananias on Saul)	Proclamation (Laying on of Hands; Gift of the Holy Spirit)
Acts 9:20	He proclaimed Jesus	Proclamation (Belief) & Prophecy (Jesus)
Acts 9:27	Declared to them …who spoke to him… he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus	Proclamation (Resurrection) & Preaching
Acts 9:29	Preaching boldly in the name of the Lord (Paul)	Preaching
Acts 9:29	He spoke and disputed against the Hellenists (Paul)	Proclamation; Debate; Persecution
Acts 9:34	Peter said to him	Proclamation (Healing)
Acts 9:40	Prayed…then he said "Rise" (Peter)	Prayer; Proclamation (Raised from the Dead; Healing; Resurrection)
Acts 10:2	Prayed constantly to God	Prayer
Acts 10:3-7	Saying to him (angel)	Proclamation (Belief, Guidance, and Direction)
Acts 10:8	Having related everything to them	Witness
Acts 10:9	To Pray (Peter)	Prayer
Acts 10:13-16	There came a voice to him	Proclamation (Direction; Guidance)

Acts 10:19-22	The Spirit said to him (Peter)…to hear what you have to say	Proclamation (Guidance; Direction)
Acts 10:28	He said to them…God has shown me (Peter)	Proclamation & Prophecy (God)
Acts 10:30-33	Said…your prayer has been heard…to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord"	Proclamation & Prophecy (God); Direction, Guidance
Acts 10:34-43	Peter opened his mouth and said… all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him received forgiveness of sins through his name."	Proclamation & Prophecy (God, Jesus, Forgiveness of Sins) Witness
Acts 10:44	While Peter was still saying this, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.	Proclamation (Gift of the Holy Spirit)
Acts 10:46	For they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God.	Proclamation (Speaking in Tongues; Praising God)
Acts 10: 47	Peter declared...who have received the Holy Spirit	Proclamation (Gift of Holy Spirit)
Acts 10:48	He commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ	Proclamation (Direction)
Acts 11:1	Heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 11:4	Peter began and explained to them…praying…heard a voice saying to me…the voice answered a second time from heaven…the Spirit told me to go with them…he told us how he had seen the angel…he will declare to you a message…I began to speak… I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said…	Proclamation; Prayer (Belief, Direction, Guidance)
Acts 10:18	They heard this they were silenced	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 10:18	They glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life."	Proclamation & Prophecy (God – Repentance)
Acts 10:19	Speaking the word to none except Jews	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 11:20	Spoke to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus	Proclamation (Belief)

Acts 11:22	News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas to Antioch	Proclamation (Direction)
Acts 11:23	He exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose	Exhortation
Acts 11: 26	Taught a large company of people	Teaching
Acts 11: 27	Foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world	Prophecy (Direction); Warning
Acts 12: 5	Earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church	Prayer (Rescue)
Acts 12:7-8	Woke him saying Get up quickly (angel to Peter)	Proclamation (Rescue)
Acts 12:11	Peter came to himself and said	Proclamation (Direction); Persecution
Acts 12:12	Gathered together and were praying	Prayer (Rescue)
Acts 12:17	He described to them how the Lord had brought him out of prison (Peter)	Proclamation (Rescue)
Acts 12:22	The people shouted "The voice of a god, and not of man!"	Proclamation (Judgment)
Acts 12:23	Made an oration to them…An angel of the Lord smote him (Herod) because he did not give God the glory	Judgment
Acts 12:24	The word of God grew and multiplied.	Proclamation
Acts 13:1-3	Prophets and teachers…worshiping the Lord..the Holy Spirit said..Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them…praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.	Proclamation (Administration/Structuration of the Church)
Acts 13:5	Proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 13:6	False prophet…sought to hear the word of God	Prophecy (false)
Acts 13:9	Filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said...astonished at the teaching of the Lord	Teaching; Prophecy; Proclamation (Judgment)

Acts 13: 15-41	So Paul stoop up, and motioning with his hand said:	Proclamation & Prophecy (God, David, John, Savior, Saul, Repentance, Abraham, Moses) Word of exhortation
Acts 13:42	People begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath.	Teaching; Proclamation (Exhortation)
Acts 13:43	Spoke to them and urged them to continue in the grace of God	Proclamation; Exhortation
Acts 13:44	Almost the whole city gathered together to hear the word of God	Proclamation & Prophecy
Acts 13:46	Spoke out boldly…it was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you.	Proclamation & Prophecy (Jews first)
Acts 13: 47	The Lord has commanded us saying	Proclamation & Prophecy (Guidance; Direction)
Acts 13:48	When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of God	Proclamation & Prophecy (Administration/Structure of the Church)
Acts 13:49	The word of the Lord spread throughout all the region…stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas	Proclamation; Persecution
Acts 14:1	So spoke that a great company believed (Paul and Barnabas)	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 14:3	Speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace	Proclamation
Acts 14:7	There they preached the gospel	Preaching; Persecution
Acts 14:9	Paul speaking…said in a loud voice	Proclamation (Healing)
Acts 14:15	Barnabas and Paul…crying…with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them.	Proclamation (Correction/Edification)
Acts 14:21	They had preached the gospel to that city	Preaching
Acts 14:22	Exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God	Proclamation (Exhortation and Encouragement); Persecution
Acts 14:24	They had spoken the word	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 14:27	Declared all that God had done with them	Proclamation (Belief)

Acts 15:1	Teaching the brethren	Teaching
Acts 15:2	No small dissension and debate with them	Debate
Acts 15:3	Reporting the conversion of the Gentiles	Reporting; Encouragement
Acts 15:4	Declared all that God had done with them	Encouragement
Acts 15:7-11	After there had been much debate, Peter rose and said to them	Proclamation (Clarification; Teaching)
Acts 15:12	They related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles	Proclamation & Witness
Acts 15:13	James replied	Teaching & Prophecy (David, God, Moses)
Acts 15:23	With the following letter	Instructions & Prophecy (Holy Spirit)
Acts 15:31	When they read it, they rejoiced at the exhortation	Proclamation (Exhortation)
Acts 15:32	Exhorted the brethren with many words and strengthened them	Proclamation (Exhortation)
Acts 15:35	Teaching and Preaching the word of the Lord	Teaching & Preaching
Acts 15:36	We proclaimed the word of the Lord	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 16:4	Delivered to them for observance the decisions which had been reached by the apostles and elders	Proclamation (Direction; Administration)
Acts 16:6	Forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia	Proclamation (Belief); Direction
Acts 16:9	Saying "Come over to Macedonia"	Prophecy (Direction)
Acts 16:10	God had called us to preach the gospel to them	Proclamation & Preaching
Acts 16:13	Spoke to the women who had come together	Prayer; Teaching; Proclamation (Faith)
Acts 16:18	Turned and said to the spirit	Proclamation (Casting out spirit of divination)
Acts 16:25	Praying and Singing Hymns to God	Praying and Singing
Acts 16:28	Cried with a loud voice "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here."	Proclamation (Faith)
Acts 16:31	They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."	Proclamation (Belief; Salvation)

Acts 16:37	Paul said to them	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 16:40	Exhorted them	Proclamation (Exhortation)
Acts 17:2-3	Argued with them from the scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying…whom I proclaim	Debate, Teaching, Preaching, Prophecy (Christ)
Acts 17:11	Received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so	Teaching
Acts 17:13	The word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Beroea also	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 17:17	Argued in the synagogue with the Jews	Debate; Proclamation
Acts 17:18	He preached Jesus and the resurrection	Preaching (Resurrection)
Acts 17:22 – 31	Said (Paul)	Preaching & Prophecy (God; Resurrection)
Acts 18:4	Argued in the synagogue every Sabbath (Paul)	Proclamation (Debate); Teaching
Acts 18:5	Occupied with preaching, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus	Preaching; Testifying/Witness; Prophecy (Jesus)
Acts 18:6	Said to them (Paul)	Proclamation
Acts 18:8	Hearing Paul believed and were baptized	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 18:9-10	Lord said to Paul	Prophecy (God); Exhortation
Acts 18:11	Teaching the word of God among them	Teaching
Acts 18:19	Argued with the Jews	Debate; Teaching
Acts 18:21	He said , I will return to you if God wills	Direction; Prophecy
Acts 18:25-28	He spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus…speak boldly in the synagogue…expounded to him the way of God more accurately…encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him…powerfully confuted the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Christ was Jesus	Teaching; Exhortation; Administration; Debate

Acts 19:2-5	He said to them	Teaching (Gift of the Holy Spirit)
Acts 19:6	Spoke with tongues and prophesied	Speaking in Tongues; Prophecy
Acts 19:8-9	Spoke boldly, arguing and pleading about the kingdom of God	Preaching; Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 19:10	All the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks	Preaching; Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 19:13	Pronounce the name of Jesus over those who had evil spirits	Preaching; Proclamation (Cast on evil spirits)
Acts 19:17	Confessing and divulging their practices	Proclamation; Confession (Salvation)
Acts 19:20	The word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily	Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 19:21	Saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."	Prophecy (Direction)
Acts 20:1-2	Exhorted them (Paul)…given them much encouragement	Proclamation (Exhortation & Encouragement)
Acts 20:7-10	Paul talked with them…prolonged his speech until midnight..said, "Do not be alarmed"	Proclamation (Belief); Preaching; Comfort
Acts 20:17-38	He said to them…prayed with them all…because of the word he had spoken, that they should see his face no more	Proclamation (Belief) & Prophecy (Holy Spirit; God); Exhortation; Prayer
Acts 21:4-5	Through the Spirit they told Paul not to go on to Jerusalem…kneeling down on the beach we prayed	Prophecy (Direction); Prayer
Acts 21:9-14	Who prophesied…a prophet…thus says the Holy Spirit…we ceased and said "The will of the Lord be done"	Prophecy (Direction)
Acts 21:19	He related one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry	Proclamation; Witness; Exhortation
Acts 21: 37-40 and Acts 22:1-28	He said to the tribune	Proclamation; Witness
Acts 23: 1-7	Paul said	Testimony; Witness
Acts 23:11	The Lord stood by him and said	Prophecy (Direction and Exhortation)
Acts 24:10-21	Paul replied	Witness & Prophecy (God)

Acts 24:24-26	Heard him speak upon faith in Christ Jesus. And as he argued about justice and self-control and future judgment…conversed with him.	Witness & Prophecy (future judgment)
Acts 25:8-11	Paul said in his defense	Witness
Acts 26:1-29	Paul made his defense	Witness & Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 27:9-11	Paul advised them…what Paul said	Witness & Prophecy (Warning, Shipwreck)
Acts 27:21-35	Paul said…God …said…Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved."…urge you..since not a hair is to perish from the head of any one of you"…giving thanks to God…	Prophecy (Shipwreck, Direction); Prayer/Thanksgiving
Acts 28:8	And prayed (Paul)	Prayer (Healing)
Acts 28:15	Paul thanked God and took courage	Prayer (Thanksgiving)
Acts 28:17-22	He said to them (Paul)	Witness; Proclamation (Belief)
Acts 28:23-28	Testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them..	Witness; Proclamation (Belief; Salvation)
Acts 28:31	Preaching the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ	Preaching & Teaching