



Acts (RCS)

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Esther Chung-Kim (PhD, Duke University) is assistant professor of religious studies at Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, California. She is the author of *Inventing Authority*.

Todd R. Hains is a PhD candidate in historical theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, and assistant project editor of the *Reformation Commentary on Scripture*.

Acts: A First Lesson in Biblical Reform

The Reformation was a call to return with renewed vigor to the biblical roots of Christian faith and practice. Still, for the Reformers, the truth of the Bible could never be separated from the true community of God's people gathered by his Word. In the book of Acts, they found God's blueprint for how the church should participate with the Holy Spirit in accomplishing his purposes in the world.

In the latest *Reformation Commentary on Scripture*, we watch as the diverse streams of the Protestant movement converge on the book of Acts. As we return with the Reformers to this vision of Spirit-filled community, we are given a lesson in the nature of biblical reform from those who bore it out for the first time. *Acts* presents a vivid portrait of the Reformers' views on the contemporary church's faithfulness to its God-given identity and calling.

The Reformers approached the narrative account of the early church in the book of Acts from diverse viewpoints. Commentators like John Calvin and the Swiss Reformed Heinrich Bullinger elaborated on the theological implications of the text with a great deal of historical detail. Others like reform-minded Catholic Johann Eck evoked episodes in Acts in response to pressing concerns of the day. Sermons upheld notable characters in Acts such as Peter, Stephen, Paul, Lydia and Apollos as examples of robust faith and of life in Christian community.

The commentators' interactions range from irate disagreement to irenic concord, but all exhort their readers not to dissolve "the holy knot" of the plain history of Christ's works and their lasting fruits. For them, Acts is certainly history, but it cannot be mere history.

About the Reformation Commentary on Scripture Series

Following IVP Academic's critical success with the *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, this project is an important step in a churchwide effort of retrieval. "The reformers saw themselves as standing in fundamental continuity with the early church fathers," says Timothy George, series editor. "The RCS seeks to present the reformers and their engagement with the Bible in the context of the ongoing history of the people of God."

The project brings together a team of world-class Reformation scholars under the leadership of general editor Timothy George and associate general editor Scott M. Manetsch. Each volume features a mix of major and minor voices from the era, with many texts appearing for the first time in English.

Projected to be a twenty-eight-volume biblical commentary, the series puts the words of the reformers directly into the hands of the contemporary church.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW CONTACT:

Krista Carnet, broadcast publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kkcarnet@ivpress.com
 Alisse Wissman, print publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or awissman@ivpress.com
 Adrianna Wright, online publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4096 or awright@ivpress.com
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BOOK DETAILS

Timothy George (ThD, Harvard University) is the founding dean of Beeson Divinity School of Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama, and senior adviser at *Christianity Today*. He is a member of the Southern Baptist-Roman Catholic Conversation Team and has participated in the Evangelicals and Catholics Together initiative.

Praise for the Reformation Commentary on Scripture

“The Reformation Commentary on Scripture is a major publishing event—for those with historical interest in the founding convictions of Protestantism, but even more for those who care about understanding the Bible. . . . This effort brings flesh and blood to ‘the communion of saints’ by letting believers of our day look over the shoulders of giants from the past. By connecting the past with the present, and by doing so with the Bible at the center, the editors of this series perform a great service for the church.”

Mark A. Noll, Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History, University of Notre Dame

“I strongly endorse the Reformation Commentary on Scripture. Introducing how the Bible was interpreted during the age of the Reformation, these volumes will not only renew contemporary preaching but they will also help us understand more fully how reading and meditating on Scripture can, in fact, change our lives!”

Lois Malcolm, associate professor of systematic theology, Luther Seminary

“The Reformation Commentary on Scripture will fill a yawning gap, just as the Ancient Christian Commentary did before it, and the first volume gets the series off to a fine start, whetting the appetite for more. Most heartily do I welcome and commend this long overdue project.”

J. I. Packer, retired, Board of Governors’ Professor of Theology, Regent College

“Why was this not done before? The publication of the Reformation Commentary on Scripture should be greeted with enthusiasm by every believing Christian—but especially by those who will preach and teach the Word of God. This commentary series brings the very best of the Reformation heritage to the task of exegesis and exposition, and each volume in this series represents a veritable feast that takes us back to the sixteenth century to enrich the preaching and teaching of God’s Word in our own time.”

R. Albert Mohler Jr., president, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

“For folks interested in reception history and historical theology, these volumes are sheer gold.”

Michael Bird, *Euangelion*, January 2012

“The RCS has produced an excellent product for the generally curious, spiritually interested, or the dedicated sixteenth-century scholar—all who stand to gain immensely as they read and enjoy each forthcoming volume.”

Matthew Harding, *Southwestern Journal of Theology*, Fall 2013



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