

Acts Chapter One (Part One) – Teaching Notes

Introduction: A key idea in Acts is that God's people should be witnesses wherever they go. Today, we hope to discuss the confirming of the Lord's resurrection and the Lord's commissioning.

Body:

Read Acts 1:1-5

I. Christianity in Jerusalem. A. The Risen Lord. 1. The Lord Confirming. Luke mentions that he is writing another book to Theophilus. In the former book, the Gospel of Luke, Jesus' departure was the conclusion of the writing. Jesus had proven His resurrection to His disciples. Jesus also told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Applications –

- **A life worth writing about.** Notice in vss. 1-2 that Luke wrote about what Jesus did and taught. As believers, we should live a life that gives others something to write about. For some, it may be life of service (e.g., kitchen worker, van driver, great teacher, marvelous community activist, enthusiastic witness, energetic worshipper, etc.). For some, it may be a life of writing. A great tragedy of the Black Christian community is that we don't have enough writings about our accomplishments, joys and concerns, convictions, and the like. In our own church family are many inspiring testimonies and valuable life lessons that have been learned in the "University of Adversity" that will be lost to the grave yards. *Let's work on living lives that are worth writing about.* Even if you are not concerned with a legacy, you ought to be concerned with what you will have going for you at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

- **Patience.** Notice in vs. 3, 5 that even after Jesus suffered such a terrible death on the cross that He still had to come back from the dead and appear for forty days and prove to His apostles that He really was who He said He was. And in vs. 5, the disciples still did not grasp the idea of a spiritual messiah. Based on the example of Jesus, we should not think that just because we say something one or two times that people will always understand. Parents, Pastors, employers, and friends know that sometimes you have to say it over and over again and sometimes even in different ways (e.g., live within your means; study, serve, and give; how to do a task; you can do it; etc.). *Let's work on having the patience needed to do what God is calling us to do.* One definition of patience is the ability to bear pain without complaint.

- **Spiritual baptism.** Notice in vss. 4-5 that Jesus taught about the promised baptism with the Holy Spirit. As New Testament believers, we are already spiritually baptized; consequently, we don't have to wait for it. Whereas water baptism identifies us with the local church, to be spiritual baptized is to be placed in the universal church (see I Cor. 12:13). Speaking in tongues is not the greatest evidence of spiritual baptism. Love is (see Jn. 13:34-15). We will talk about tongues latter in our studies. *Let's make sure we don't use our misunderstanding of scripture as an excuse for not being about our Father's business.* There is such an urgent need for laborers, in light of the harvest being so plenteous (e.g., a great need for youth, men, women, health, economic, and community ministry).

Read Acts 1:6-11

2. The Lord Commissioning. The disciples asked about Jesus' kingdom. Jesus told them, essentially, that the Father will handle that. The disciples need to focus on receiving the Holy Spirit and being witnesses of Jesus.

Applications –

- **Staying in our lane.** Notice in vss. 7-8 that Jesus reminds His disciples to essentially stay in their lane. On one hand, the restoring of the kingdom is not their immediate concern. But on the other hand, receive the power of the Holy Spirit for witnessing is to be their concern. There are many who focus on things that are not on their list of duties and almost ignore those things that have been assigned to them. *Let's work on staying in our lanes or carrying out our given assignments.* The church family, our biological families, and even our jobs can run so much more harmoniously, if we can work on doing our jobs and leavening the jobs of others for others to do. Image Deacons who make sure all troubled members are more than adequately ministered to, Trustees who make sure all business and property matters are well cared for, and members who go out of their way to not only grow in the Lord but to bring and help others along with them.

- **Power to witness.** Notice in vs. 8 that the disciples were to receive the power of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses. As New Testament believers, we already have the power of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses. When we accepted Jesus as our savior by faith, we also received the Holy Spirit. He gave us the power to be witnesses, to tell what we know to be true, when He came into our lives. The question of our day is not do we have the Holy Spirit's power to witness, it is, "Are we using it properly"? If we are not inviting and bringing loved ones with us to church and Christ, we are not using it properly. If we are not trying to help people get saved and to grow to be disciples, we have some work to do. *Let's work on using the power of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses.*

- **God's plan, people, and hope.** Notice in vss. 9-11 that Jesus ascends back to the Father. Two men in white, angels, talked to the awed disciples. And Jesus' return is mentioned. First, we should remember that as terrible as Calvary was, it was the path to ascending back to the Father and paying for the sins of the world. We should remember that no matter how terrible things may be in our lives, God has a plan that is working for the good of God's people. Second, the men in white or angles should remind us to be careful how we treat people. We may be entertaining not only angels but our next blessing. And then the promised return of Jesus should give us hope beyond what we can see. When money is funny, friends are few, and health has fallen, we should still have hope in Jesus' return or our meeting Him in our death. *Let's be mindful of trusting God's plan, treating people right, and having hope in God.*

Conclusion: Let's work on being witnesses for Jesus everywhere we go. God has much for those who obey His will.