

ACTS: The Story of Christ's Work Continues
[His Work 1:1 - His Witnesses 1:8 - His Purposes 13:36]

Discussion Questions for Sunday, June 21, 2015

"The Witnesses are Called" (Acts 1:4-11)

1. Review and discuss the 5 significant themes running through the book of Acts.
2. In terms of the METHOD OF CHRIST'S WORK, He says He will do it through Spirit-empowered witnesses. The baptism of the Spirit has been greatly misunderstood and the point of much contention. In what ways does the following help you straighten things out?

Jesus doesn't just leave them hanging. The resurrected Jesus says exactly HOW IT WOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED. 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." WOW. There it is. In the key verse in the whole book. Let that sink in.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." Maybe we are too familiar with this. We are talking POWER of GOD here! Creation out of nothing power, dead raised to life Resurrection power. I can do anything I want, anytime I want because I am Almighty God power. He had just spoken of being baptized with the Holy Spirit. 1:5 "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." He is not talking water baptism. To be baptized means immersed or submerged. Statement of fact...not something you have to work for. 1 Cor. 12:13 "we have all been baptized (lit...submerged) into the Holy Spirit." Unconditional fact. Every believer following Pentecost receives the Holy Spirit... He takes up residence as the dominating force in your life...you are sealed by the Spirit, protected for eternal glory...anointed by God.

The Holy Spirit within you... Eph. Paul prayed...that you can...understand, know, be filled...with full power of the Holy Spirit...evidenced by increased love and fullness... consuming sense of worship of God. The power that works within you. Col. 3:16 let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly...Eph. 5:18 be filled with the Spirit...dominated by the Word of God because that's how the Holy Spirit's power is released. 1 Cor. 6 your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. You don't seek that. You receive it as a gift. Not a second blessing, the first blessing. A lot of people get that wrong and get themselves into all kinds of emotional wackiness. 1 Cor. 12:13 "for by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" – engulfed - in the Holy Spirit for POWER. Luke 24:47-49 "...repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." 'Clothed with power' is another way of saying 'baptized in the Holy Spirit'. Jesus was anointed at His baptism with the Holy Spirit and power. So it stands to reason that His followers would be too. In order to do His work. THE METHOD IS TO USE SPIRIT-FILLED AND POWERED WITNESSES.

3. When you consider the MAGNITUDE OF CHRIST'S MISSION, what does the sheer size of the task do to you? How encouraging is it to know that the Gospel spreads not by human power, but by God using sinful humans for His sovereign purposes? What geographical or cultural barriers, and more importantly attitudinal barriers do you need to overcome and repent of?
4. Discuss the following: Effective Witnesses are contagious repenters. If you want to win some people to Christ you need to be winsome...humble, sensitive, grateful and not thinking of yourself as more important than others...you will never minister effectively to anyone you think less of or dislike or resent. DON'T GET ANGRY AT THE MISSION FIELD> LOVE THEM. ONE SOUL AT A TIME.

5. What do you usually think when you hear that believers are to preach the Gospel? Acts 8:4-6 shows us that it is via one to one personal witness (8:4 euangelizo - announcing good news) and group by group public proclamation (8:5-6 Kerusso - heralding or proclaiming) that the Gospel is to be preached,

Read and discuss the following:

Acts says they spoke the Word with boldness. And they encountered opposition because of the preaching of the Word. They were commanded not to preach in the name of Jesus. It is still happening today...people being told not to mention the name of Jesus in many settings public and private. There were two kinds of preaching going on...private and public. Acts 8:4-6. Verse 4 those who were scattered due to the persecution went everywhere preaching the Word. That doesn't mean preaching in a church service. Literally it means 'gossiping' the Word. Spreading it from person to person. bringing the good news. Euangellizo...announce good news. Their primary desire was to tell people about Jesus. Should be ours. The other kind of preaching you see in verse 5. Phillip went down to Samaria and was preaching... proclaiming Christ. A different word...Kerusso...heralding, standing in a public place and addressing a group. Verse 6 the crowds were giving attention to what he said. Christ's Witnesses preach the Gospel, one to one, personally, and to groups publically. THE GOSPEL WILL SPREAD ONE BY ONE THROUGH YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY and GROUP BY GROUP via PUBLIC PROCLAMATION. LOVE PEOPLE ONE SOUL AT A TIME IN PERSONAL WITNESS. AND IF GOD GIVES YOU A LARGER PLATFORM, LOVE THEM ONE GROUP AT A TIME IN PUBLIC PROCLAMATION. If we are being and doing what God intends... We won't stay static but we will grow in depth and numbers. HOW? By preaching! Through one to one interaction and public proclamation.

6. Pray through the GCO prayer guide together. Give special attention to "making supplication for all the saints."