

# Acts 1 Commentary

PREVIOUS

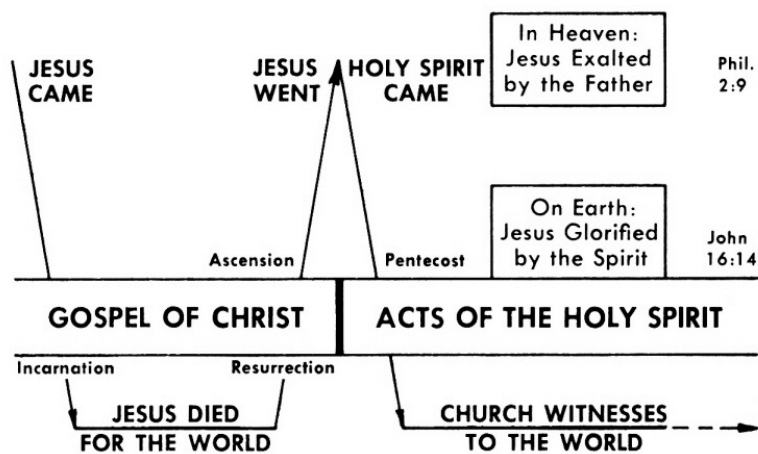
NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

- Acts 1:1 Commentary
- Acts 1:2 Commentary
- Acts 1:3 Commentary
- Acts 1:4 Commentary
- Acts 1:5 Commentary
- Acts 1:6 Commentary
- Acts 1:7 Commentary
- Acts 1:8 Commentary
- Acts 1:9 Commentary
- Acts 1:10 Commentary
- Acts 1:11 Commentary
- Acts 1:12 Commentary
- Acts 1:13 Commentary
- Acts 1:14 Commentary
- Acts 1:15 Commentary
- Acts 1:16 Commentary
- Acts 1:17 Commentary
- Acts 1:18 Commentary
- Acts 1:19 Commentary
- Acts 1:20 Commentary
- Acts 1:21 Commentary
- Acts 1:22 Commentary
- Acts 1:23 Commentary
- Acts 1:24 Commentary
- Acts 1:25 Commentary
- Acts 1:26 Commentary

Click chart to enlarge  
Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission  
[Another Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll



Acts 1:1 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach,

GNT Acts 1:1 Τ ν μ ν πρ τον λ γον ποιησ μην περ π ντων, Θε φιλε, ν ρξατο ησο ς ποιε ν τε κα διδ σκειν,

NLT Acts 1:1 In my first book I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach

KJV Acts 1:1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

ESV Acts 1:1 In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach,

ASV Acts 1:1 The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach,

CSB Acts 1:1 I wrote the first narrative, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach

NIV Acts 1:1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach

- **The first account I composed** Luke 1:24
- **Theophilus** Luke 1:3
- **about all that Jesus began to do and teach** Acts 2:22; Mt 4:23,24; 11:5; Luke 7:21-23; 24:19; John 10:32-38; 18:19-21; 1 Peter 2:21-23
- [Acts Video - 3 hours - Luke's Introduction](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:1,2 The Church: Continuing What Jesus Began](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-5 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur

## WHAT JESUS BEGAN TO DO... JESUS NOW CONTINUES

**Suggestion** - Before you begin your study of Acts, take a moment to carefully look over Irving Jensen's wonderful "road map" (chart at top of page) of this most incredible journey which covers approximately 30 years and describes the birth of the Church and the expansion of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire. The "signposts" in Jensen's chart will help you keep your bearings in this long, detailed and exciting book.

**Frank Allen** - The theme of The Acts is, that which Jesus continued to do, by His Spirit, through His disciples. This book is closely linked to, and virtually a continuation of, the Gospel by Luke.

**D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones** called Acts "that most lyrical of books....Live in that book, I exhort you: It is a tonic, the greatest tonic I know of in the realm of the Spirit." (The Christian Warfare)

**G Campbell Morgan** - THE book which we call the Acts of the Apostles may be said to complete the **Pentateuch of New Testament** history. Four of these books present the Person of our Lord; while the fifth gives the first page of the history of the Church; that is, the story of the first activities of Christ, in power, in the history of the race. ([Acts of the Apostles](#))

**W H Griffith-Thomas** on the practical importance of Acts - The record shows what the Church can do in the face of opposition when it honours its Lord and is full of the Holy Spirit. It has been said that there are five powers governing society:—Eloquence, Learning, Wealth, Rank, the Army. The Christian Church had none of these; on the contrary, all five were arrayed against it. Yet the Church conquered. In this book, moreover, we have (1) the first chapter of Church history; (2) the Divine principles of spiritual revival and missionary work; (3) the Divine pattern of Church government and life; (4) the Divine methods of Church work and extension.

**Ajith Fernando** writes that "Some scholars have regarded Acts as the most important book in the New Testament, or at least as its pivotal book, coming as it does between the Gospels and the letters.(William Barclay) It records the origin and growth of the Christian movement, telling us how the first believers lived out Christianity. It describes its message and ministry, and its life—including its triumphs and trials, the passions that drove it, and the source of the power that energized it. Any Christian wanting to know how to be a disciple of Christ in this world should turn to Acts to know how the first Christians lived. A recent topical study of Acts was therefore appropriately entitled [The Master Plan of Discipleship](#) (Robert Coleman)....Many have felt that Acts should be called "The Acts of the Holy Spirit." The first chapter records the promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4–5, 8), the second his descent, and the rest of the book his work in and through the church." ([NIV Application Commentary](#))

**Adrian Rogers** called his sermon series on Acts "**Old-Time Religion**" emphasizing "that we need to **take a look back**, that we might **really face the future**. And it's very important that we do this today, because it is the **Old-Time Religion** that needs to be the **New-Time Religion**. I heard that Billy Graham had come to a particular city some time ago—he was supposed to come for a revival crusade, and there was a preacher who didn't want him to come. The preacher was kind of liberal, and he said, "We don't want that

man here in our city. Why, he will set evangelism back fifty years." When Billy Graham heard that, he said, "Well, I didn't want to set evangelism back fifty years; I wanted to set it back two thousand years." Amen? That's what we need to do—get back to the basics.

**Stott** - The most accurate (though cumbersome) title, then, which does justice to Luke's own statement in verses 1 and 2, would be something like **'The Continuing Words and Deeds of Jesus by His Spirit through His Apostles.'** ([The Message of Acts](#))

In the Greek text Acts 1:1-4 is all one long sentence.

**The first account I composed** - This refers to the **Gospel of Luke**. It was **first** (protos) which can refer to the first in a set, in this case first Luke's Gospel, then his book of Acts which picks up where the Gospel ended, with Jesus' crucifixion, burial and resurrection. It is interesting that at one time the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts were joined together as one book composed of two volumes.

**THOUGHT** - So **protos** means the first of two, not implying a third, but as discussed below the Book of Acts is still be written by Spirit filled believers ([See the Schematic above](#) and note bottom right "**Church witnesses to the world**") Are you witnessing to the world? Are you living a Spirit filled life like the believers in Acts? Are you writing a chapter with your life dear follower of Christ? **A T Pierson** writes that "The Acts of the Apostles should therefore be studied mainly for this double purpose: first, to trace our Lord's unseen but actual continuance of His divine teaching and working; and, secondly, to trace the active ministry of the Holy Spirit as the abiding presence in the Church (THAT IS YOU DEAR SPIRIT FILLED READER!)."

**G Campbell Morgan on first account** - The continuity is apparent on the surface. We have the same writer, Luke; the same reader, Theophilus; the same subject, Jesus. ([Acts of the Apostles](#))

**Joseph Alexander on first account** - Former treatise might be more exactly rendered first book or discourse. Herodotus applies the same Greek word (λόγος) to the divisions of his history. It is not so much a former treatise, or distinct work, that is here referred to, as a first instalment of the same that is continued in the book before us.

**I** - While he does not give his name in either the Gospel or Acts, this personal pronoun almost certainly from the pen of Luke. We know that Luke was a physician (Colossians 4:14). Almost all authorities consider Luke to be the only Gentile writer in the Bible (from his name). And we know that he traveled frequently with Paul (Acts, Colossians 4:14, Philemon 1:24, 2 Timothy 4:11). Luke arrived in Jerusalem with Paul in Acts 21:17 and left with him again on the journey to Rome in Acts 27:1. In those two years, Luke had time to research and write his Gospel and the Book of Acts.

**Boice** writes that "Ancient books were generally written on papyrus scrolls. It was practical to have a scroll about thirty-five feet in length. When it got any longer it got too bulky to carry around. This physical limitation has determined the length of many books of the Bible."

**David Guzik** - In the mid-1960's, A.N. Sherwin-White, an expert in Graeco-Roman history from Oxford, wrote about Acts: "The historical framework is exact. In terms of time and place the details are precise and correct . . . As documents these narratives belong to the same historical series as the record of provincial and imperial trials in epigraphical and literary sources of the first and early second centuries AD...For Acts the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming...Any attempt to reject its basic historicity even in matters of detail must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted." ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**Account** ([3056](#)) (**logos** from **légō** = to speak with words, to arrange in order; English = logic, logical) is the general term for speak, but always referred to communication with rational content. Stated another way **logos** describes a communication whereby the mind finds expression in words. In this case Luke's mind was "moved by the Holy Spirit (and he) spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:21+) to pen these inspired words, giving us a "systematic treatment" of the birth of Christianity. Luke as a physician would have been very keen on details so undoubtedly much of what he saw and heard has not been recorded in this account, but it is all "inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, so that the man (and woman) of God may be adequate, equipped for **every good (God) work,**" (2 Ti 3:16-17) and specifically for the good work to "proclaim the excellencies of Him Who has called US out of darkness into His marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9)

**Logos** was a customary name for a division of the work which covered more than one roll of papyrus

**William Barclay** observes "Imagine what it would be like if the Book of Acts wasn't in the Bible. You pick up your Bible and see the ministry of Jesus ending in the Gospel of John; next you read about a man named Paul writing to the followers of Jesus in Rome. Who was Paul? How did the Gospel get from Jerusalem to Rome? The Book of Acts answers these questions. "A great New Testament scholar has said that the title of Acts might be, 'How they brought the Good News from Jerusalem to Rome.'"

**James Montgomery Boice** speaking of first century Christianity - "Humanly speaking, it had nothing going for it. It had no money, no proven leaders, no technological tools for propagating the Gospel. And it faced enormous obstacles. It was utterly new. It taught truths that were incredible to the unregenerate world. It was the subject to the most intense hatreds and persecutions."

**Adrian Rogers** adds that Jesus has given the apostles something that is "almost like a **mission impossible**. Here they are. Look at them—a little group, ragtag apostles, some of them fishermen. They're unlettered, most of them, don't have any education. They don't have any college behind them. They have no seminaries. They have no finances. They have no prestige. They have no political pull. And they are commanded to go into all of the world (Acts 1:8) and tell the message of a Galilean peasant Who died on a cross, crucified by the Roman government. It's a **mission impossible**. Think of what they had, and then think of what they were up against. There was the imperial might of the iron legions of Rome. There was the intellectual sophistry of the Greeks. There was the religious bigotry of the Jewish religion. And here they are!" And Jesus said, "You will receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth." And it reads like a magnificent novel, but it is absolutely true. It is the story of the church triumphant." (Acts 1:1-8 - Making Jesus Known)

[Wikipedia](#) says "Acts of the Apostles (Ancient Greek: Πράξεις τῶν ἀποστόλων, Práxeis tōn Apostólōn; Latin: Actūs Apostolōrum), often referred to simply as Acts, is the fifth book of the New Testament; it tells of the founding of the Christian church and the spread of its message to the Roman Empire." But **Boice's** and **Roger's** comments suggest a much more accurate title is "**The Acts of the Spirit of Jesus in and through the Apostles.**" (Yes, it's a long title but is far more accurate) While in one sense, the apostles started with "nothing," in another sense, they started with **everything**, for they would soon receive the promised Gift of the Holy Spirit, the same power Who was present at the beginning of Creation (Ge 1:2), the same power Who energized Jesus during His 3+ year ministry (cf Luke 4:14+, Acts 10:38-39+). In short, the apostles had **everything** they needed to accomplish what God was calling them to accomplish for His glory. And the same is true in our lives beloved, for each of us has been given not only the indwelling Spirit but also at least one spiritual gift and each believer is God's workmanship "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them," energized by the power of His indwelling Spirit. (Eph 2:10+) Indeed, as Peter (who had experienced this supernatural power) wrote "His divine power has granted to us **everything** pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. " (2 Peter 1:3+). So as you read and meditate on the wonderful book of Acts, keep in mind that while 2000 years have passed, God is still calling His people to take the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the world and we have been given the same power Source that the apostles were given. The upshot is that we have no excuse for not accomplishing God's work in each of lives. As Paul said we need to be "making the most of our time, because the days are evil." (Eph 5:16+). Indeed, when we die, may it be said of us by the watching world this is a man or a woman "who has turned the world upside down!" (Act 17:6ESV+) As Adrian Rogers said "We have been given a commission. We have been given a responsibility. And I want us in the Book of Acts to think about living **supernaturally**, not **superficially**." (Ibid)

**Theophilus** (**theos** = God + **philos** = friend) means "friend of God" or "God lover." In the beginning of his Gospel, Luke addresses Theophilus as **most excellent Theophilus** (Luke 1:3+), which was a way to address someone who held a high office. Most commentators agree that Theophilus was almost certainly a real person, probably a patron or sponsor of Luke. A few think Luke used the name as an "[epithet](#)" but this seems much less likely in view of his mention in Luke 1:3 and the fact that he had a specific title (**most excellent**) supporting the idea that he was a person of importance.

**Kistemaker** on **most excellent** - This description also occurs in addresses to the Roman governors Felix and Festus (see Acts 23:26+; Acts 24:3+; 26:25+). We assume that Theophilus belongs to the educated, ruling class of society.

**Marshall** says **Theophilus** "means 'dear to God', but it is doubtless the real name of a real person and not just a symbolical name. The omission of the courteous 'most excellent' used in Luke 1:3 is quite natural at the second occurrence of the name." (TNTC-Acts)

In either case, what a great name, the very name given to Abraham by God Himself! Friends speak with one another and in Ex 33:11 we see Moses was treated as God's friend for "Jehovah used to speak to Moses face to face, just as man speaks to his friend."

Abraham the friend of God:

James 2:23+ and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the **friend of God**.

2 Chr 20:7 "Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham **Your friend** forever?"

Isaiah 41:8 "But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham **My friend**,

- **Gotquestions** - [Who was Theophilus at the beginning of Luke and Acts?](#)

## ACTS IS JUST THE BEGINNING OF ALL JESUS WILL DO AND TEACH

**About all that Jesus began to do and teach** - All that Jesus began refers to the first account, the Gospel. So if the Gospel is all Jesus began to do and teach, the Acts is simply the continuation of all that Jesus did and taught through His Spirit empowered apostles and disciples. Note that **all** (all things) is a relative expression meaning all that Luke planned and was inspired to write clearly not all the things Jesus ever did because even John says "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books which were written." (Jn 21:25)

**Jesus** (2424) (**lesous**) is a **transliteration** of the Greek lesous, which is a transliteration of the Hebrew **Jehoshua** or **Yeshua** which means Jehovah is help or Jehovah is salvation. Matthew gives us a "working definition" of Jesus writing "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name **Jesus**, for He will save His people from their sins." (Mt 1:21) Adrian Rogers adds "Every good book has a hero, and the hero of this book (Bible) is Jesus." ([Jesus You're My Hero](#)).

**F F Bruce** - As the Gospel tells us what Jesus began to do and teach, so Acts tells what He continued to do and teach by His Holy Spirit.

**Stott** - Jesus' ministry on earth, exercised personally and publicly, was followed by his ministry from heaven, exercised through His Holy Spirit by his apostles. ([The Message of Acts](#))

Note that **began** (to take the first step in carrying out an action) is an expression of time and, in context, the clear implication is that something is to follow what Jesus **began**, which is as Paul Harvey used to say ["The Rest Of The Story"](#) ([Example of "Rest of the Story" on John Calvin](#)) of what Jesus did in and through His apostles (and all the disciples) by His Spirit in the book of Acts, a story that continues even as you read these words and will continue until Jesus returns! Maranatha! Amen! In short what **Jesus began to do and teach**, the Church is to continue. The amazing truth is that God uses flesh and blood, fallen, redeemed men and women to write a "book" describing the spread of the life transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ to "every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues" (Rev 7:9+). Is the Spirit continuing Jesus' work through you beloved? Remember the words of our Lord

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and **greater works than these he will do** (because the Spirit of Jesus now indwells EVERY believer throughout the world); because I go to the Father....I will ask the Father, and He will give you **another** (not heteros but allos = another of the same kind!) **Helper** (See parakletos ~ Paraclete), that He may be with you forever. (John 14:12, 16)

"The Holy Spirit was God's ascension gift to Christ, that he might be bestowed by Christ, as his ascension gift to His Church." (Pierson) The book of Acts is a collection of some of the "**greater works**" prophetically promised by Jesus. Notice that Jesus' promise functions somewhat like a conditional statement. What is the "condition" that needs to be fulfilled in order for a person to do "**greater works**?" The simple answer is faith in Christ, and so clearly every believer is potentially capable of being used as an vessel of honor (2 Ti 2:21+) to carry out these "**greater works**!" [Are you experiencing a Christian life of "greater works?"](#) If not, the book of Acts is just what the Great Physician ordered to cure whatever "ails" you!

**A T Pierson** comments - Whatever other conceptions may properly pertain to the name, Paraclete, this seems to be central and controlling: the Holy Spirit **comes** when Christ **goes**—comes to take the place of the absent Lord Jesus (cf Jn 7:38-39+); to become, therefore, to the believer, and to the Church as the collective body of believers, all that Christ would have been had He remained on earth, with this added advantage: that, as a condition of His humiliation, the Lord Jesus submitted to certain limitations of His and our humanity, and was therefore, while in the flesh, not practically omnipresent; whereas the Holy Spirit, not having assumed a human body as His mode of incarnation, is, equally and everywhere, resident in and abiding with every believer. Hence it was "expedient" for his disciples that Christ should "go away"; for when He departed He sent the Paraclete to act in His stead (John 16:7, 15:26, cf Acts 2:33)....**This book we may, perhaps, venture to call the Acts of the Holy Spirit, for from first to last it is the record of His advent and activity.** Here He is seen coming and working; and all normal activity in believers, individually and collectively, is traced, like a stream, past its human channel to its divine Source and spring. But one true Actor or Agent is here recognized, all other so-called actors or workers being merely His instruments; an **agent** being one who acts, an **instrument** being that through which He acts. (The Acts of the Holy Spirit)

**A T Pierson** ends his book with a stirring challenge: Church of Christ! The records of these acts of the Holy Ghost have never



reached completeness. This is the one book which has no proper close, because it waits for new chapters to be added so fast and so far as the people of God shall reinstate the blessed Spirit in His holy seat of control.

**Frank Allen** writes that "The shout that rang out of the darkness of Calvary, "It is finished," resounds through the centuries to tell of the completed atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. The declaration, "Jesus began both to do and teach" (1:1), as it appears in the opening sentence of The Acts, impresses upon us the great message that Christ in saving a lost world had but begun His work. There is no intimation that Jesus "began" in the sense that other great thinkers were to complete plans, discover new truths, or perfect an incomplete beginning; but rather that he was to continue to do, through his disciples, by His Spirit, that which he had initiated, designed and exhorted them to fulfill....The Acts is the only authentic history of the first generation of the Christian Church. Its record is supplemented to some extent by statements in the Epistles. It does not pretend to be a complete record of the work of the Apostles during that period which it covers. It tells us more of Peter and Paul than of any others. John is mentioned near the first of the Book as he worked along with Peter. Other important leaders in the church, as Philip, Stephen, James, Barnabas, Mark, Silas and Timothy, are spoken of briefly. Many other prominent disciples, prophets and missionaries are named....Volumes might have been written and yet the story of the early church would not have been complete. The history of the period covered in The Acts during one generation furnishes an example for all following generations. We have the same problems, the same trials, the same skepticism, the same willingness on the part of some to accept the Gospel and give their lives for him whom they have learned to love, and the same bitter opposition on the part of many who oppose its progress." (Acts of the Apostles)

As **Pastor Ray Stedman** said "The Gospel of Luke is the record of the **incarnation** of the Son of God. In John's word, he was "the Word made flesh, who came and dwelt among us," (John 1:14KJV). Jesus, the Man, came to begin something, **"to do and to teach,"** and the record of that beginning is in the Gospels. But, by clear implication, this second book is the continuation of what **Jesus began to do**. In a very real sense, Acts is not the acts of Christians, but the continuing acts of Jesus. It is an account of what Jesus continues **to do and to teach**. In the Gospels He did it in His physical body of flesh. In the book of Acts He is doing it through the bodies of men and women who are indwelt by His life. Thus, whether in the Gospels or in Acts, **incarnation** is the "*secret strategy*" by which God changes the world. Whenever God wants to get a message across to men he does not simply send someone to announce it; His final way of driving it home is to dress the message in flesh and blood. He takes a life and aims it in a certain direction and, by the manifestation of His own life through the blood and flesh of a human being, He makes clear what He has to say. **That is the strategy of the book of Acts** It is **the record of incarnation**; men and women, possessed by Jesus Christ, owned by Him (Titus 2:14-+, 1 Peter 2:9-+, 1 Cor 6:19-20-+), and thus **manifesting His life** (cf Gal 2:20-+). **That is the secret of authentic Christianity**. Anytime you find a Christianity that is not doing that, it is false Christianity. No matter how much it may adapt the garb and language of Christianity, if it is not the activity human beings possessed and indwelt by the life of Jesus Christ it is not authentic Christianity! That is the true power of the Church, as we shall see in this book. **The book of Acts therefore is an unfinished book**. It has never been ended, but is **still being written**. The book abruptly closes with an account of Paul in the city of Rome, living in his own hired house. It just ends there as though you might turn over the next page and begin the next adventure. This book is Volume 1, and we are writing Volume 20 now. It may well be the last volume in the series. I hope so. ([Acts 1:1-14 Out of the Shadows](#)) (Bolding added)

**Ray Stedman's** insightful analysis begs repetition of the searching question (for all us)...

### **Is God's Spirit writing the next chapter of the book of Acts in and through my life?**

**Teach** (present tense - continually)([1321](#))(**didasko** from **dáo**= know or teach; English = didactic) means to provide instruction or information in a formal or informal setting. The root meaning carries has the idea of systematic teaching or training. It is used of a choir director who trains a choir over a long period of rehearsals until they are able to perform. In short, what a "systematic theology course" the apostles must have received during the three plus years and the last forty days with the resurrected Jesus!

But as Luke says Jesus' teaching on earth was not the end but just the beginning, because He continued His teaching through His Spirit, Whom Luke refers to as "the Spirit of Jesus" (Acts 16:7-+). We see Jesus as the Head of the newly born Church (Eph 1:22, Col 2:19) clearly exercising His authority (cf Mt 28:18, Col 2:10) in phrases such as "the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the **Lord** our God shall call to Himself" (Acts 2:39-+) and "the **Lord** was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved." (Acts 2:47-+). Peter declared that Jesus cured the lame man at the gate of the temple (Acts 3:2-5, 6-+). It was the resurrected, ascended Lord Jesus Christ Who appeared to Paul on the way to Damascus (Acts 9:3-6-+). It was the Lord Jesus who appeared to Paul in Corinth and said: "I have much people in this city." Thus all through the Book the Lord continued to work by miracles, by signs, by wonders and by testimony through His disciples.

**Didasko** is used more by Luke than any other NT writer - Lk. 4:15; Lk. 4:31; Lk. 5:3; Lk. 5:17; Lk. 6:6; Lk.

11:1; Lk. 12:12; Lk. 13:10; Lk. 13:22; Lk. 13:26; Lk. 19:47; Lk. 20:1; Lk. 20:21; Lk. 21:37; Lk. 23:5; Acts 1:1; Acts 4:2; Acts 4:18; Acts 5:21; Acts 5:25; Acts 5:28; Acts 5:42; Acts 11:26; Acts 15:1; Acts 15:35; Acts 18:11; Acts 18:25; Acts 20:20; Acts 21:21; Acts 21:28; Acts 28:31

**And** (present tense - continually) **do** ([poieo](#)) - What did Jesus **do**? This refers especially (but not exclusively) to His miracles, including post-resurrection miracles (cf Jn 20:19, 21:6).

**Adrian Rogers** observes that "in the Gospels, you find out what Jesus did in His human body, the **body** of His flesh. In the Book of Acts, you find out what Jesus is doing in His mystical **body**, the church. You see, Jesus is still active and alive on Planet Earth today, and He still has a body. In the Gospels, it was His material, physical body. In the Book of Acts, it is His new body, which is the church, and Jesus is alive and well today in His mystical body. This is what the Bible calls, in Colossians 1:27 "Christ in you." You see, we're not here just imitating the Lord Jesus (cf 1 Cor 11:1, 1 John 2:6, 1 Peter 2:21). I love the idea, "What would Jesus do?" That implies what would He do if He were here. Friend, He is here. And it is not what would He do? We just need to let Him do what He will do (through His Spirit Who indwells us!) We are the visible part of the invisible Jesus, and He is the invisible part of the visible church....we need to stop **doing** things for Jesus. We need to start **letting Him do** something through us. You see, there is only one Person who has ever lived the Christian life. What's His name? Jesus. No one else has ever lived the Christian life, only Jesus. And if the Christian life is lived where you hang your hat, where you go to work, where you go to school, it will not be *you* living it; it will be **Jesus living it in you.**" (by His Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus!) (See **Related topic** - [The Holy Spirit-Walking Like Jesus Walked!](#))

**Paul** understood this vital principle that sadly much of the modern church seems to have missed

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. (Galatians 2:20+)

**Comment:** And how did Christ live in Paul? Yes, Christ was in him, but when Jesus went up, He sent the Spirit down and it is the Spirit of Jesus Who was living in Paul and empowering him for supernatural ministry. That pattern has not changed. It is the Spirit of Jesus Christ in us that supernaturally empowers us and makes "mission impossible," into "mission possible!"

**Adrian Rogers** goes on to tell this story - Stuart Briscoe, a great preacher, said, "When I first got saved, gave my heart to Jesus, I went out to live for Him." He said, "This is wonderful." But then, he said, "After I stumbled and fell several times, boy, this is difficult." He said, "I rededicated my life and started again," but then, he said, "I stumbled and fell again. And I stopped saying this is wonderful, or this is difficult. I began to say this is impossible." Then he said, "I discovered that it was Jesus Christ in me who was going to do it through me." And then, he said, "This is wonderful—this is wonderful." We need to stop trying, and start trusting, and let Jesus Christ live His life in us....The Book of Acts is what Jesus is continuing to do. God wants to write a twenty-ninth chapter of the Book of Acts, and He wants to write it through" YOU!...Living the Christian life is a miracle. There are three miracles in the Christian life. There's the first miracle, which is the new birth. That's a wonderful miracle. There's the concluding miracle, the last miracle, which is our translation, when we are made to be like the Lord Jesus. But in between that first miracle and that last miracle there's a middle miracle, and that is the life that we live. Our life is to be a supernatural life. Now, I want you to remember this: that the Christian life is not your **responsibility**. It is your **response** to His **ability**. [Major Ian Thomas](#) said about this, "*I can't—He never said I could; He can—He always said He would.*" (**ED**: ONE CAVEAT - "*HE ALWAYS SAID HE WOULD*" GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROVISION OF POWER DOES NOT RELIEVE US OF OUR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY! IT IS NOT "LET GO, LET GOD," BUT "LET GOD, LET'S GO!") And so, that's the first thing we need to do. We need to recognize His presence in us."

**Guzik** writes "Wonderfully, what Jesus began still continues. There is a real sense in which the Book of Acts continues to be written today. Not in an authoritative Scriptural sense; but in the sense of God's continued work in the world by His Spirit, through His church. "The Acts of the Apostles should therefore be studied mainly for this double purpose: first, to trace our Lord's unseen but actual continuance of his divine teaching and working; and, secondly, to trace the active ministry of the Holy Spirit as the abiding presence in the church." (Pierson) ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**Frank Allen** has an interesting note - There are 1007 verses in this book. The "**we**-passages" include 318, those know to Paul 366, and those to Philip 66. "We can readily see," says J.H. Kerr, "that Luke from his own experience, and from what he could learn from Paul and Philip, could write 724 verses, or over seven-tenths of the whole book, without having recourse to any documents. There remain but 283 verses to be accounted for, and these relate to the words of Peter, all of which may have been preserved in some written form to which the historian had access. From this, it is evident that the sources of information contained in the book were written records, oral testimony and personal knowledge"

---

**First** ([4413](#))(**protos**) 1) first in time or place 1a) in any succession of things or persons 2) first in rank 2a) influence, honour 2b) chief 2c) principal 3) first, at the first

**Gingrich** - 1. **first**—a. **first, earliest, earlier** Mt 12:45; 21:28; Mk 12:20; Lk 2:2; 20:29; Jn 1:15, 30 (both =

earlier); Jn 5:4 v.l.; 20:4; Acts 1:1 ; 20:18; 26:23; Phil 1:5; 2Ti 4:16; Heb 9:15; 10:9; Rev 1:17 .—**b. first, foremost, most important, most prominent** Mt 20:27; Mk 6:21; 12:28; Lk 13:30; Acts 25:2; 1Cor 15:3; Eph 6:2; 1 Ti 1:15.—**c. outer, anterior** Heb 9:2, 6, 8.—

**2. the neut. proton as adv.—a. of time or sequence first, in the first place, before, earlier, to begin with** Mt 5:24; 8:21; Mk 4:28; 13:10; Lk 12:1; J 15:18; 18:13; Ac 7:12; Ro 1:8; 15:24; 1 Cor 12:28 ; 15:46.—**b. of degree in the first place, above all**, especially Mt 6:33; Acts 3:26; Ro 1:16; 2:9f; 2 Cor 8:5; 1 Ti 2:1; 2 Pt 1:20 . [English words using **proto-**, a combining form, in protomartyr, protomorphic protozoa; proton]

**Friberg** adds **protos** is "I. adjectivally first of several; (1) of time; (a) in comparison of past and present earlier, first, former (Rev 2:5); (b) in antithesis between the beginning and the end first, before anything else (Rev 1:17), opposite *σχατος* (last, final); (2) of rank and value first (of all), foremost, chief, most important of all; (a) of things (Mt 22:38); (b) substantivally, of persons ο πρ τοι the leading men, the most important persons (Mk 6:21); (3) of number or sequence first (Mt 21:28; HE 10:9); (4) spatially front; substantivally πρῶτη the outer (tent) (Heb 9:2, 6, 8); II. substantivally, neuter singular πρ τον as an adverb; (1) of time at first, to begin with, (for) the first time (Ro 1:16); before, earlier (Jn 15:18); (2) of priority or value first of all (Mt 5:24); of degree above all, especially, in the first place (Mt 6:33)

**Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource Classical Greek** - Technically speaking **prōtos** is the superlative adjective form of the term *pro*. Thus **prōtos** means "foremost, first" (cf. the comparative form *prōteros* which regularly appears in the Septuagint). Classical usage of **prōtos** is very diverse. It can mean "first" in rank; "first" in order; "first" in quality, i.e., "best"; "first" in the temporal sense. Many other definitions are attested (see Liddell-Scott). Antonyms of **prōtos** include *eschatos*, "last," or *husteros*, also meaning "last, latter."

**Septuagint Usage** - The Septuagint employs **prōtos** as a translation for several Hebrew expressions, the most common being *ri'šhôn*, "first, former." **Prōtos** is primarily used in temporal expressions to indicate dates (Genesis 8:5, 13, "first month"; cf. Exodus 12:2; Ezekiel 26:1; 30:20) and sequence (Ecclesiastes 1:11, "There is no remembrance of former things"). It is also used to denote order ("Judah ... will set out first," Numbers 2:9, NIV), rank (2 Kings 25:18 [LXX 4 Kings 25:18], "chief priests"; cf. Jeremiah 52:24), and quality (1 Samuel 15:21 [LXX 1 Kings 15:21], "the best" things, NIV). In Isaiah 44:6 *prōtos* is used as a title: "I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God." This title describes Jesus as well (cf. Isaiah 41:4; 48:12; Revelation 1:11, 17).

**New Testament Usage** - **Prōtos** occurs throughout the New Testament in each of the senses outlined above. Particularly striking is the New Testament phenomenon of the "first and the last" in the kingdom of God. The standards of the kingdom of God reverse those of society. The first will be last and the last will be first (Mark 10:31 with parallels; cf. Luke 19:47, another example of rank, *hoi protoi* = the leaders of the people). Whoever wishes to become great in the Kingdom must be a servant, and "whoever wants to be first (*prōtos*) must be slave of all" (Mark 10:43, 44, NIV). The qualitative sense "best" is illustrated aptly by the Parable of the Prodigal Son. The father requested the "best" robe to be brought to the errant son (Luke 15:22). Temporally, *prōtos* signifies an earlier or former time period (e.g., Philippians 1:5; Revelation 21:4). Jesus spoke of himself as the First (*prōtos*) and the Last (*eschatos*). This rare substantival occurrence speaks of the totality of Jesus, His eternity, and as such it recalls the similar expression, "I am Alpha and Omega" (Revelation 1:17; cf. 1:8, 11).

**Protos** - 149v - before(3), best(1), first(128), first of all(2), first importance(1), first man(1), first one(1), first things(1), first time(1), foremost(5), leading(2), leading man(1), leading men(5), outer(3), previous(1). Matt. 5:24; Matt. 6:33; Matt. 7:5; Matt. 8:21; Matt. 10:2; Matt. 12:29; Matt. 12:45; Matt. 13:30; Matt. 17:10; Matt. 17:27; Matt. 19:30; Matt. 20:8; Matt. 20:10; Matt. 20:16; Matt. 20:27; Matt. 21:28; Matt. 21:31; Matt. 21:36; Matt. 22:25; Matt. 22:38; Matt. 23:26; Matt. 26:17; Matt. 27:64; Mk. 3:27; Mk. 4:28; Mk. 6:21; Mk. 7:27; Mk. 9:11; Mk. 9:12; Mk. 9:35; Mk. 10:31; Mk. 10:44; Mk. 12:20; Mk. 12:28; Mk. 12:29; Mk. 13:10; Mk. 14:12; Mk. 16:9; Lk. 2:2; Lk. 6:42; Lk. 9:59; Lk. 9:61; Lk. 10:5; Lk. 11:26; Lk. 11:38; Lk. 12:1; Lk. 13:30; Lk. 14:18; Lk. 14:28; Lk. 14:31; Lk. 15:22; Lk. 16:5; Lk. 17:25; Lk. 19:16; Lk. 19:47; Lk. 20:29; Lk. 21:9; Jn. 1:15; Jn. 1:30; Jn. 1:41; Jn. 2:10; Jn. 7:51; Jn. 8:7; Jn. 10:40; Jn. 12:16; Jn. 15:18; Jn. 18:13; Jn. 19:32; Jn. 19:39; Jn. 20:4; Jn. 20:8; Acts 1:1; Acts 3:26; Acts 7:12; Acts 12:10; Acts 13:46; Acts 13:50; Acts 15:14; Acts 15:18; Acts 16:12; Acts 17:4; Acts 20:18; Acts 25:2; Acts 26:20; Acts 26:23; Acts 27:43; Acts 28:7; Acts 28:17; Rom. 1:8; Rom. 1:16; Rom. 2:9; Rom. 2:10; Rom. 3:2; Rom. 10:19; Rom. 15:24; 1 Co. 11:18; 1 Co. 12:28; 1 Co. 14:30; 1 Co. 15:3; 1 Co. 15:45; 1 Co. 15:46; 1 Co. 15:47; 2 Co. 8:5; Eph. 6:2; Phil. 1:5; 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:16; 1 Tim. 2:1; 1 Tim. 2:13; 1 Tim. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:4; 1 Tim. 5:12; 2 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:6; 2 Tim. 4:16; Heb. 7:2; Heb. 8:7; Heb. 8:13; Heb. 9:1; Heb. 9:2; Heb. 9:6; Heb. 9:8; Heb. 9:15; Heb. 9:18; Heb. 10:9; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 4:17; 2 Pet. 1:20; 2 Pet. 2:20; 2 Pet. 3:3; 1 Jn. 4:19; Rev. 1:17; Rev. 2:4; Rev. 2:5; Rev. 2:8; Rev. 2:19; Rev. 4:1; Rev. 4:7; Rev. 8:7; Rev. 13:12; Rev. 16:2; Rev. 20:5; Rev. 20:6; Rev. 21:1; Rev. 21:4; Rev. 21:19; Rev. 22:13

Gen. 8:5; Gen. 8:13; Gen. 32:17; Gen. 32:19; Gen. 33:2; Gen. 41:20; Exod. 4:8; Exod. 12:2; Exod. 12:15; Exod. 12:16; Exod. 12:18; Exod. 34:1; Exod. 34:4; Exod. 40:2; Exod. 40:17; Lev. 9:15; Lev. 23:5; Lev. 23:7; Lev. 23:11; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:39; Lev. 23:40; Num. 2:3; Num. 2:9; Num. 7:12; Num. 9:1; Num. 9:3; Num. 10:13; Num. 10:14; Num. 20:1; Num. 28:16; Num. 28:18; Num. 29:13; Num. 33:3; Deut. 10:1; Deut. 10:2; Deut. 10:3; Deut. 10:4; Deut. 13:9; Deut. 16:4; Deut. 17:7; Jos. 4:19; Jos. 8:30; Jos. 15:21; Jos. 18:11; Jdg. 20:22; Jdg. 20:32; Jdg. 20:39; Ruth 3:10; 1 Sam. 2:16; 1 Sam. 9:22; 1 Sam. 14:14; 1 Sam. 15:12; 1 Sam. 15:21; 2 Sam. 13:16; 2 Sam. 16:23; 2 Sam. 18:27; 2 Sam. 19:43; 2 Sam. 20:18; 2 Sam. 21:9; 2 Sam. 24:25; 1 Ki. 2:35; 1 Ki. 16:23; 1 Ki. 17:13; 1 Ki. 18:25; 1 Ki. 20:9; 1 Ki. 20:17; 2 Ki. 1:14; 2 Ki. 25:18; 1 Chr. 11:6; 1 Chr. 11:11; 1 Chr. 12:15; 1 Chr. 18:17; 1 Chr. 24:7; 1 Chr. 25:9; 1 Chr. 25:28; 1 Chr. 27:2; 1 Chr. 27:3; 1 Chr. 27:33; 1 Chr. 29:21; 2 Chr. 3:3; 2 Chr. 9:29; 2 Chr. 12:15; 2 Chr. 16:11; 2 Chr. 17:3; 2 Chr. 20:34; 2 Chr. 25:26; 2 Chr. 26:20; 2 Chr. 26:22; 2 Chr. 27:5; 2 Chr. 28:26; 2 Chr. 29:3; 2 Chr. 29:17; 2 Chr. 35:1; 2 Chr. 35:27; 2 Chr. 36:22; Ezr. 1:1; Ezr. 3:12; Ezr. 5:13; Ezr. 6:3; Ezr. 6:19; Ezr. 7:5; Ezr. 7:9; Ezr. 8:31; Ezr. 10:17; Neh. 5:15; Neh. 7:5; Neh. 8:18; Neh. 12:46; Est. 1:14; Est. 3:12; Est. 8:9; Job 8:7; Job 8:8; Job 15:7; Job 18:20; Job 23:8; Job 42:11; Job 42:14; Job 42:17; Ps. 71:1; Prov. 20:9; Prov. 26:18; Eccl. 1:11; Cant. 4:14; Isa. 9:1; Isa. 11:14; Isa. 41:4; Isa. 43:18; Isa. 43:26; Isa. 43:27; Isa. 44:6; Isa. 48:12; Isa. 60:9; Isa. 65:16; Jer. 50:17; Jer. 52:24; Ezek. 27:17; Ezek. 27:22; Ezek. 29:17; Ezek. 30:20; Ezek. 32:17; Ezek. 40:1; Ezek. 45:18; Ezek. 45:21; Dan. 1:21; Dan. 7:1; Dan. 7:4; Dan. 7:8; Dan. 7:24; Dan. 8:1; Dan. 8:21; Dan. 9:1; Dan. 9:2; Dan. 10:1; Dan. 10:4; Dan. 10:12; Dan. 10:13; Dan. 10:21; Dan. 11:1; Dan. 11:13; Dan. 11:29; Joel 2:20; Amos 6:6; Mic. 4:8; Hag. 2:9; Zech. 6:2;



## Related Resources:

- [Acts Book Introduction](#) - John MacArthur
  - [Analysis of Acts](#) - James Van Dine
  - [Is the Book of Acts Historically Accurate?](#) - Don Stewart
  - [The Acts of the Apostles - Trustworthiness](#) - William Ramsay
- 

**Illustration** - There's a story—I don't know whether it's true or not, but it's often told; it probably is true—about the legendary coach of the Green Bay Packers, Vince Lombardi. And it is said that one day his team had played miserably, and he brought them all in to what we used to call, when I played football, skull practice. That is, not on the field, but thinking, practicing, getting your head right, getting, between your ears, things arranged. And the legendary coach wanted to get the boys back to the fundamentals, back to the basics of the game. And he reached in a bag and pulled out a football, and said, "Gentlemen, this is a football." Now, these are professional football players, but he's saying, I'm going to go back to the rudiments, back to the basics, "Gentlemen, this is a football," and to go from there. I think that's what the church of the Lord Jesus Christ needs to do today, is to go back to the very basic, fundamental, rudimentary elements of our faith. So I want to tell you, "Ladies and gentlemen, this is a Bible." This is a Bible. It is the Word of God. We need to go back and find out what God wants us to do. They criticized Billy Graham one time. They said of Billy Graham, "Why, he's not up to date with his evangelism, and his methods, and he's behind. He's decades behind." He said, "Oh." He said, "No, I'm not. I don't want to set the church back a decade or two decades. I want to set it back two thousand years. I want to get back to the very essence, the very fundamentals, of the faith. So let's look right here in these first eight verses of the Book of Acts. (Adrian Rogers)

---

**A T Pierson** dedicates his work on Acts which he entitles "The Acts of the Holy Spirit" with a description of a Spirit empowered saint who lived centuries after the last chapter of Acts (Acts 28), and is evidence that the Acts of the Holy Spirit are still going on! O, be so empowered by the Spirit of Christ that we could emulate this example...

Pastor Adoniram Judson Gordon,—A Man Full Of The Holy Ghost And Of Power, Separated By The Spirit, And Anointed Of God, For The Work Whereunto He Was Called, A Minister Of Christ, Who Fed The Flock Of God Over Which The Holy Ghost Had Made Him Overseer, Not As Being Lord Over God's Heritage, But As Being An Ensample To The Flock; Who, Being Led By The Spirit, Searched The Deep Things Of God; Whose Speech And Whose Preaching Was Not With Enticing Words Of Man's Wisdom, But In Demonstration Of The Spirit; And Who, Before His Translation, Had This Testimony, That He Pleas'd God,— This Humble Contribution To The Great Theme That So Engrossed The Later Years Of His Holy And Useful Life Is, By His Bereaved Friend, And Associate In Bible Study And Christian Service, Most Lovingly Dedicate.

---

**Steven Cole** gives us an **introduction** to the book of Acts...

How do you launch a worldwide enterprise? In the last century, Coca-Cola did it. You can go just about anywhere in the world and buy a Coke. They are the world's largest multi-national corporation. Right behind them is Microsoft. Last year when I was in Poland and Romania, I discovered that although the languages were different, their computers looked and worked just like mine, with the familiar Windows and Word screens. The church is Jesus Christ's worldwide "enterprise." He prophesied that He would build His church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it (Matt. 16:18). The Book of Acts tells us how His church began in Jerusalem and spread to the ends of the earth. It provides a vital link between the gospels and the New Testament epistles. How did the Christian faith that began with a few followers of Jesus in Israel spread to Rome and points beyond? How did an ardent Jew who was not even a believer become the apostle to the Gentiles? How did the early church, which was exclusively Jewish, begin to reach out to and incorporate the Gentiles? Without Acts, we would be hard pressed to answer these questions. While we have four gospel accounts of the life of Jesus Christ, there is only one Book of Acts.

The title, **Acts of the Apostles**, was probably added sometime in the second century, but it is a bit of a misnomer. "**Acts**" fits, since there is plenty of action. But "**apostles**" isn't quite right, since the story does not tell of the deeds of most of the apostles, but primarily of Peter (chapters 1-12) and Paul (chapters 13-28). The book actually describes **the acts of Jesus through the Holy Spirit in His servants**

Almost all Bible scholars agree that Luke was the author of Acts. He was a physician (Col. 4:14), and the only Gentile author of the Bible. An early writing, dated between A.D. 160-180, tells us that Luke was a Syrian from

Antioch, a single man who accompanied Paul until his martyrdom, and who died himself at age 84 (cited by Simon Kistemaker, Acts [Baker], p. 20). Luke probably wrote Acts about A.D. 62-64, toward the end of Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, where the book leaves off. There is no mention of the intense persecution launched by Nero in A.D. 64, or of the martyrdom of Paul in about 68, and so Acts was probably written before these events.

The first verse of Acts links it with the introduction of Luke's Gospel (Luke 1:1-4). Both volumes were written to an otherwise unknown man, Theophilus, who was probably a Roman official, to provide an accurate historical foundation for his faith in Jesus Christ. Together, Luke and Acts comprise about 30 percent of the New Testament, surpassing both the writings of Paul and John in size (Richard Longenecker, The Expositor's Bible Commentary [Zondervan] p. 207).

**PURPOSE:** Why did Luke write Acts? Several theories are proposed, but probably his primary purpose was to provide an account of the beginnings of the Christian church in order to strengthen his readers' faith and to give assurance that its foundation is firm (I. Howard Marshall, Acts [IVP/Eerdmans] p. 21). Perhaps a skeptic had tried to convince Theophilus that his faith was based on myths or legends. Luke wants to show through his gospel and Acts that the accounts were based on eyewitness testimony given by credible men who were not promoting it for personal gain. In fact, they proclaimed the message in the face of strong opposition and even death.

Luke also intended to explain how the church spread from Jerusalem to Rome, encompassing both Jews and Gentiles, in accord with God's purpose. One key to understanding Acts is to see that it is a transitional book, showing how the worship of God moved from the Jewish temple, to the hesitant acceptance of Gentiles into the Jewish church, and finally to the Christian worship of predominately Gentile churches all over the Roman empire. Acts shows us how God went from working primarily with the Jews as a nation to working with the church, comprised of Jews and Gentiles on equal footing. In Matthew 21:43, Jesus had told the Jewish leaders, "The kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it." Acts shows us the transition that lasted from the death of Jesus to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, which fulfilled Jesus' prophecy.

Acts records many miraculous signs that were given to prove to Israel that they had been wrong to reject Jesus as their Messiah and Lord. The main message that the apostles and others in Acts proclaimed centered on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, which was the primary sign authenticating Jesus as the Christ, and on the offer of forgiveness of sins in His name. The apostles were given unusual miraculous power, authenticating them as God's witnesses to Jesus Christ and His resurrection. While God obviously can and does work miracles today (after all, He is God!), to claim as some do that miracles should happen today with the same frequency as in Acts is to miss the transitional nature of the book. God had a special purpose for miracles, to authenticate the apostles within this transition period.

**THEMES:** In addition to the transitional nature of Acts with miracles to authenticate the message and the messengers, and the central message of Christ and His resurrection from the dead, there are several other themes running throughout Acts:

- The sovereignty of God in the founding of the church and the spread of the gospel. Clearly, God is at work and nothing can stop what He intends to do.
- The power of the Holy Spirit, given to all who believe in Jesus Christ.
- The importance of prayer in the life of the church.
- The importance of preaching God's Word. Acts contains numerous sermons and speeches, including eight by Peter, nine by Paul, one lengthy sermon by Stephen, and a shorter one by James. The addresses by Peter, Paul, and Stephen make up about 25 percent of the book (John Stott, The Message of Acts [IVP], p. 69).
- The importance of mission to all peoples. This outward thrust of the gospel is the main story line of Acts. Acts shows us how to do evangelism and missions.
- The reality of opposition and suffering in the spread of the gospel. Clearly, although God is sovereignly at work and nothing can stop what He is doing, His servants often suffer greatly, even unto death, in the cause.
- The life and organization of the church. Acts gives us glimpses of early church life that show us how the church dealt with problems as it grew.

**OUTLINE: A simple outline of Acts is contained in Acts 1:8:**

1. The witness in Jerusalem—primarily to Jews (Acts 1:1-8:3).
2. The witness in Judea and Samaria—including the first Gentiles (Acts 8:4-11:18).
3. The witness to the remotest parts of the earth—to the Jew first, but predominately to Gentiles (Acts 11:19-

---

**[WILLIAM MITCHELL RAMSAY](#)** (1851-1939) was converted to Christianity trying to find archaeological proof to debunk the Book of Acts! Instead, he found evidence that supported the historical accuracy of the book of Acts which debunked his atheistic beliefs!

William Ramsay was a renowned archaeologist and New Testament scholar from Scotland. He was knighted by the British crown for his work in archaeology. He was raised an atheist, and as a brilliant student at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland and at Oxford University in England, he sat at the feet of theological modernists and skeptics who disbelieved the Bible. It was assumed that the Bible is not historically accurate and that it contained a large portion of mythology. It was thought that the book of Acts was not written until 150 A.D., about a century after the events it describes. When Ramsay began archaeological and historical research in Asia Minor beginning in 1881, he expected and hoped to find more evidence against the Bible. Instead, he discovered fact after fact that supported the Bible. He eventually concluded that the book of Acts was written during the lifetime of the apostles and that it is historically accurate. His discoveries led to his conversion to Christianity.

**Josh McDowell** wrote that Ramsay

"had spent years deliberately preparing himself for the announced task of heading an exploration expedition into Asia Minor and Palestine where he would [find] the evidence that the book was the product of ambitious monks, and not the book from heaven it claimed to be. He regarded the weakest spot in the whole New Testament to be the story of Paul's travels. These had never been thoroughly investigated by one on the spot. Equipped as no other man had been, he went to the home of the Bible. Here he spent fifteen years digging. Then in 1896 he published a large volume, [Saint Paul, the Traveler and the Roman Citizen](#). ... The book caused a furor of dismay among the skeptics of the world. Its attitude was utterly unexpected because it was contrary to the announced intention of the author years before. For twenty years after that publication, book after book came from the pen of the same author, each filled with additional evidence of the exact, minute truthfulness of the whole New Testament as tested by the spade on the spot. And these books have stood the test of time, not one having been refuted, nor have I found even any attempt to refute them" ( *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, p. 62).

**William Ramsay** himself testified regarding the Book of Acts:

"The present writer takes the view that Luke's history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness. At this point we are describing what reasons and arguments changed the mind of one who began under the impression that the history was written long after the events and that it was untrustworthy as a whole" ([The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament](#), 1915). (Cf "[Trustworthiness of Acts](#)")

**Acts 1:2 until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.**

KJV Acts 1:2 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:

- **until the day when He was taken up to heaven** Acts 1:9; Mark 16:19; Luke 9:51; 24:51; John 6:62; 13:1,3; 16:28; 17:13; 20:17; Ephesians 4:8-10; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 6:19,20; 9:24; 1 Peter 3:22
- **after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders** Acts 10:38; Isaiah 11:2,3; 42:1; 48:16; 59:20,21; 61:1; Mt 3:16; 12:28; John 1:16; 3:34; Revelation 1:1; 2:7,11,17,29; 3:16,13,22
- **given orders** Mt 28:19; Mark 16:15-19; Luke 24:45-49
- **to the apostles whom He had chosen** Acts 1:13; 10:40-42; Mt 10:1-4; Mk 3:14-19; Lk 6:13-16; Jn 6:70; 13:18; 20:21; Gal 1:1; Eph 2:20; 2 Pe 3:2; Rev 21:14
- [Acts Video - 3 hours - Luke's Introduction](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:1,2 The Church: Continuing What Jesus Began](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-5 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur

**THE TURNING POINT:**

## JESUS' ASCENSION

**Until the day when He was taken up to heaven** - This refers of course to His ascension described in Acts 1:9-11 <sup>±</sup>. **Until the day** is an expression of time -- **until** describes something happening up to a point in time. What happened was that Jesus was there in Person, doing, teaching, giving orders and this personal interaction with His apostles continued until He ascended. As shown [in the diagram above](#), the Ascension of Jesus marks the turning point in the history of the world, for when Jesus went up, the Spirit came down and Jesus continued His ministry through the Spirit empowered apostles who "**turned the world upside down!**" (Acts 17:6KJV-+).

**Kistemaker** observes that this verse has three distinct "topics" - Jesus' ascension, His instruction, His election.

**John Stott** says "Here Luke tells us how he thinks of his two-volume work on the origins of Christianity, which constitutes approximately one quarter of the New Testament. He does not regard volume one as the story of Jesus Christ . . . and volume two as the story of the church of Jesus Christ . . . For the contrasting parallel he draws between his two volumes was not between Christ and his church, but between two stages of the ministry of the same Christ. . . Thus Jesus' **ministry on earth**, exercised personally and publicly, was followed by his **ministry from heaven, exercised through his Holy Spirit by his apostles**. Moreover, the watershed between the two was the **ascension**. Not only did it conclude Luke's first book and introduce his second (Acts 1:9), but it terminated Jesus' earthly ministry and inaugurated his heavenly ministry." ([The Message of Acts](#))

**Taken up** (353)([analambano](#) from **ana** = up + **lambano** = take) means literally to take up, to assume. Depending on the context **analambano** can mean to cause to go up, to lift up and carry away in this case used three times in chapter 1 to describe the **Ascension of Jesus** (Acts 1:2, 11, 22, cf the other uses of **analambano** describing His ascension = Mk 16:19, 1 Ti 3:16). Jesus being **taken up** is where Luke ended his Gospel "While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was **carried up into heaven**." (Lk 24:51+). It is fascinating that taken up is in the passive voice, indicating the power that enabled Jesus to ascend was from outside of Himself. One is reminded of Enoch who "obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God." (Heb 11:5) Indeed as **Bock** says "The ascension stands as a key divine act vindicating Jesus and placing Him in authority at the right hand of God (Ps. 110:1; Acts 2:32-35-+)" ([Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Acts](#))

Most of the 13 uses of this verb are by Luke in Acts - Acts 1:2; Acts 1:11; Acts 1:22; Acts 7:43; Acts 10:16; Acts 20:13; Acts 20:14; Acts 23:31

**After He had by the Holy Spirit given orders**(By or through the Holy Spirit) - This is a fascinating statement. Why do I say that? Jesus has returned from the dead and here we see that He is still expressing His dependence on the Spirit. He chose not to rely on His own resources but on the power and presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Amazing! Now I do not fully understand the dynamics, but clearly His Spirit is intimately involved in Jesus' post-resurrection ministry, just as He was before He was crucified (cf Acts 10:38-39-+). If Jesus depended on Him after the resurrection, how much more do we need to depend on Him? That's a rhetorical question of course. We are absolutely, totally dependent on the Spirit. The minute we say "I've got this one, is the minute we set ourselves up to fail."

**Steven Cole** on **by the Holy Spirit** - Everything that Jesus did, He did in obedience to the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Vincent** on **by the Holy Spirit** - Construe with **had given orders**: by means of the Holy Spirit, Who inspired Him. (Fascinating!)

**Kistemaker** on **by the Holy Spirit** - The Holy Spirit dwelled in Jesus, for Jesus breathed on his disciples and gave them the Holy Spirit (John 20:22). In their ministry, he directed his apostles through the Holy Spirit (see, e.g., Acts 16:7). The Spirit of Jesus is the Holy Spirit.

**R Tuck** on **by the Holy Spirit** - From the teaching of what the Spirit was, beyond measure, in Christ, we may learn what the Holy Ghost can be, within measure, in man; what he may be to apostles and to us. In conclusion, show, practically, that the necessary condition of the abiding of the Holy Ghost in Christ was his perfect openness and entire submission to the Spirit's lead; and that this Christ-like openness is still the one condition of the Spirit's abiding and working in us. Impress the warnings of the apostles against the danger of resisting, quenching, and grieving the Holy Ghost. [The Holy Ghost in Christ](#)

**Related Resource:**

- [Personhood of the Spirit](#)

**J Vernon McGee** adds that His ascension did not cease His doing and teaching for "Now, from the vantage place of the right hand of God, He is continuing to work through the Holy Spirit. As in the army where commands pass from one man to another, so the Lord Jesus Christ is working through the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit operates through the apostles and on out to you and to me where we are today. This is a remarkable statement." (Thru the Bible).

**Marshall** - The other point is the reference to the Holy Spirit as the source of guidance for Jesus in choosing the apostles. One of the concerns of Luke is to demonstrate how both Jesus and the church were directed by the Spirit to fulfil the purpose of God for them. (TNTC-Acts)

**A T Pierson** - Here all the blessed intercourse between the risen Lord and his disciples, during the forty days between his resurrection and ascension, all the marvelous communications that he made to them as he spake to them of things pertaining to the kingdom of God, are traced to the Holy Spirit. This prepares the reader to appreciate the importance of the commandment immediately following: that his disciples "should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father," the baptism of that same Holy Spirit for which Christ himself had waited thirty years, before beginning his public ministry. The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. If even he was indebted to the Holy Spirit for the power of his ministry, surely we cannot afford to attempt the work appointed us without the same anointing....The same Holy Spirit who abode in Christ, through whom he discoursed of the kingdom and gave the disciples both instruction and commandment, was to descend upon them, dwell in them, and be to them the source and secret of all power in working and witnessing. (Ibid)

**Orders to the apostles** - This was Jesus' objective with the apostles during the 40 days after His resurrection. No, these men never went to seminary, but they received an education unlike anyone in the history of the world - straight from the Master Teacher Himself! Some of these "orders" undoubtedly include the "**Great Commission**" (Mt 28:18-20+, Mk 16:15,16), as well as His charge to them in Luke 24:49+ "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power (THE HOLY SPIRIT) from on high."

**A T Pierson** writes that "The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. If even he was indebted to the Holy Spirit for the power of his ministry, surely we cannot afford to attempt the work appointed us without the same anointing."

**NET Note on orders** - Although some modern translations render *enteilamenos* as "instructions" (NIV, NRSV), the word implies authority or official sanction (G. Schrenk, TDNT 2:545), so that a word like "orders" conveys the idea more effectively. The action of the temporal participle is antecedent (prior) to the action of the verb it modifies ("taken up"). **To the apostles whom He had chosen** - Notice how even in this description we see that the first century apostles were unique for they were personally chosen by Jesus.

**Vincent on given orders** - Special injunctions or charges. Compare Matt. 4:6; Mark 13:34; Heb. 11:22.

**Bock on orders** - The commandment alluded to here (*enteilamenos*) refers to the call to a mission that these chosen apostles should lead. This mission represents the next phase of God's work and takes place in fulfillment of Scripture about the Christ, as Luke 24:47 declares. (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Acts)

**The apostles whom He had chosen** - These are not self-appointed leaders. They are not even volunteers, but were sovereignly chosen by Christ and were subject to His authority. The name they often given to themselves is "bondservants" or slaves (*doulos* - cf Paul = Ro 1:1, Peter = 2 Pe 1:1, James = James 1:1), men who had surrendered wholly themselves to the Lord and His will for their life. In the final analysis these men were witnesses who told others what they had seen and heard.

**Kistemaker** notes that "Luke employs the term **apostles**, for in Acts he characterizes believers as **disciples** (learners) and the **apostles** as teachers." For example, we read...

They (the believers, the disciples) were continually devoting themselves **to the apostles' teaching** and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42+)

**Apostles** ("Sent Ones")<sup>9652</sup>(*apostolos* from *apo* = from + *stello* = send forth) ([Click](#) discussion of [apostle](#)) means one sent forth from by another, often with a special commission to represent another and to accomplish his work. The apostles were commissioned and sent out on a mission and with the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf Mt 28:18-20). Normally, the term **apostles** applies to the twelve (minus Judas, plus Matthias) and to Paul. There is one exception in Acts 14:14 where Luke describes "the apostles Barnabas and Paul." Bock adds that "In Judaism, such a representative speaks for the one who sends him. "A man's agent is like to himself" (m. [Berakot 5.5](#))." (Ibid)

**Luke** has 34 of the 80 NT uses of the word **apostle** - Lk. 6:13; Lk. 9:10; Lk. 11:49; Lk. 17:5; Lk. 22:14; Lk. 24:10; ; Acts 1:2; Acts 1:26; Acts 2:37; Acts 2:42; Acts 2:43; Acts 4:33; Acts 4:35; Acts 4:36; Acts 4:37; Acts 5:2; Acts 5:12; Acts 5:18; Acts 5:29; Acts 5:40; Acts 6:6; Acts 8:1; Acts 8:14; Acts 8:18; Acts 9:27; Acts 11:1; Acts 14:4; Acts 14:14; Acts 15:2; Acts 15:4; Acts 15:6; Acts 15:22; Acts 15:23; Acts 16:4;

**Chosen** (<sup>1586</sup>)(*eklego* from *ek* = out, out of, out from + *légo* = select, choose) (related word [eklektos](#)) means literally to select out, single out or choose out of. The idea in **eklego** speaks of the sizable number from which the selection is made. It implies the taking of a smaller number out of a larger. For example, in secular use, Virgil's *Eclogues* (from *eklego*) are short, selected excerpts taken



from a more larger collection of poems.

**Luke** used **eklego** 11 times (out of 20 NT uses) in his writings - Lk. 6:13; Lk. 9:35; Lk. 10:42; Lk. 14:7; Acts 1:2; Acts 1:24; Acts 6:5; Acts 13:17; Acts 15:7; Acts 15:22; Acts 15:25

Luke's first use of **eklego** describes Jesus' choice of the apostles after a time of prayer

It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God. 13 And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and **chose (eklego)** twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles: 14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James and John; and Philip and Bartholomew; 15 and Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot; 16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. (Lk 6:12-16+).

**Eklego** is used again in this same chapter to describe the choosing of the replacement for Judas...

And they prayed (EVEN AS JESUS HAD PRAYED BEFORE HE CHOOSE THE FIRST TWELVE) and said, "You, **Lord**, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two **Youhave chosen**. (Acts 1:24+)

**Comment** - Notice Who is still in control! The ascended Lord chooses Judas' replacement!

The related word **ekloge** is used in Acts 9 by Jesus to describe Saul's calling as an apostle (cf Ro 1:1+)

But the **Lord** said to him, "Go, for he (Saul) is a **chosen (ekloge)** instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel (Acts 9:15+)

**Comment** - So clearly Jesus Christ the Lord though ascended was still in control! This begs a simple application question - Is Jesus Lord of my life? Am I daily surrendering my will to Him, so that He through His Spirit might direct and empower my life? Or am I kicking against the goads, so to speak (Acts 26:14)? Yielding yourself to Jesus is a great way to begin each morning! (cf Ro 12:1+)

#### Related Resources:

- [What is an apostle?](#)
- [Is God restoring the offices of apostle and prophet in the church today?](#)
- [What is the difference between a disciple and apostle?](#)

**Acts 1:3 To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.**

KJV Acts 1:3 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:

- **To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs** Acts 13:31; Mt 28:9,16; Mark 16:10-14; Luke 24:1-53; John 20:1-21; 1 Corinthians 15:5-7; 1 John 1:1
- **appearing to them over a period of forty days** Deuteronomy 9:9,18; 1 Kings 19:8; Mt 4:2
- **speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God** Acts 28:31; Daniel 2:44,45; Mt 3:2; 21:43; Luke 17:20,21; 24:44-49; Romans 14:17; Colossians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:12
- [Acts Video - 3 hours - Luke's Introduction](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-5 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur

### **MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR FAITH**

**To these** - The 11 apostles. "He chose them and then also manifested himself to these very same men that they might have personal witness to give."

**He also presented Himself alive** - The apostles received first hand proof of His resurrection. This was crucial. They must be firmly convinced Jesus had truly risen from the dead for that is **the foundational truth of Christianity**. Without the truth of the

resurrection, Christianity fails for as Paul wrote "if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless ([mataios](#)); you are still in your sins." (1 Cor 15:17, context = 1 Cor 15:12-19, 20)

Paul summarized Jesus' appearances noting that not only did Jesus present Himself to the apostles, but also to more than 500 individuals

(After His Resurrection Jesus) appeared to Cephas (PETER), then to the twelve. 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; (1 Corinthians 15:5-7-+)

**Presented** (3936) ([paristemi](#) from **para** = near, beside + **histemi** = place, set) literally means to place beside or near or to stand beside. In the present context the idea is that Jesus made a visual demonstration to the apostles by standing beside or near them. He proved or demonstrated the truth of the Resurrection by appearing alive to the disciples. Note that while the Bible describes visions of angels, etc, this was NOT a vision but a literal appearance of Jesus in bodily form that could be seen and touched.

**Vincent** adds that **paristemi** in its original meaning meant "to place beside, and so commend to the attention. Hence, to set before the mind; present, show."

**Luke** uses **paristemi** more than any other NT writer with most uses in the book of Acts - Lk. 1:19; Lk. 2:22; Lk. 19:24; ; Acts 1:3; Acts 1:10; Acts 4:10; Acts 4:26; Acts 9:39; Acts 9:41; Acts 23:2; Acts 23:4; Acts 23:24; Acts 23:33; Acts 24:13; Acts 27:23; Acts 27:24

**Alive** (present tense - continually)(2198)([zao](#)) means that Jesus was alive physically.

**Robertson** on **presented Himself alive** - To the disciples the first Sunday evening (Mark 16:14 = Luke 24:36-43 = John 20:19-25), the second Sunday evening (John 20:26-29), at the Sea of Tiberias (John 21:1-23), on the mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20 = Mark 16:15-18), to the disciples in Jerusalem and Olivet (Luke 24:44-53; Mark 16:16-19f.= Acts 1:1-11). Luke uses this verb **paristemi** 13 times in the Acts both [transitively](#) and [intransitively](#). It is rendered by various English words (present, furnish, provide, assist, commend). The early disciples including Paul never doubted the fact of the Resurrection, once they were convinced by personal experience. At first some doubted like Thomas (Mark 16:14; Luke 24:41; John 20:24-29; Matt. 28:17). But after that they never wavered in their testimony to their own experience with the Risen Christ, "the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses." Peter said (Acts 3:15). They doubted at first, that we may believe, but at last they risked life itself in defense of this firm faith. (Word Pictures in the NT)

**Wiersbe** explains that "Faith in His resurrection was important to the church because their own spiritual power depended on it. Also, the message of the Gospel involves the truth of the Resurrection (Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 15:1-8); and, if Jesus were dead, the church would be speechless. Finally, the official Jewish position was that the disciples had stolen Jesus' body from the tomb (Matt. 28:11-15), and the believers had to be able to refute this as they witnessed to the nation....By their words, their walk, and their mighty works, the believers told the world that Jesus was alive. This was "the sign of Jonah" that Jesus had promised to the nation (Matt. 12:38-41)—His death, burial, and resurrection." (Bible Exposition Commentary)

**After His suffering - His suffering** is a synonym for the Crucifixion of Christ, [His passion](#) ("passion" is from Latin: *passionem* suffering, enduring) being a repeated emphasis in the book of Acts. In Acts 3:18 Luke wrote ""But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would **suffer** (pascho), He has thus fulfilled." Luke uses **pascho** again in Acts 17:3+ where Paul addressing the Thessalonian Jews was "explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to **suffer** (pascho) and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ." Luke uses the derivative adjective *pathetos* in Acts 26:23 writing " that the Christ was to **suffer** (*pathetos* from *pascho*), and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles."

**Suffering** (3958)([pascho](#)) means to undergo something; to experience an impression from an outside source, to undergo an experience (usually difficult) and normally with the implication of physical and mental suffering as in this case. **Pascho** is used some 16 times (out of 39) to refer to the [passion](#) of Christ (Mt. 16:21; Mt. 17:12; Mk. 8:31; Mk. 9:12; Lk. 9:22; Lk. 17:25; Lk. 22:15; Lk. 24:26; Lk. 24:46; Acts 1:3; Acts 3:18; Acts 17:3; Heb. 2:18; Heb. 5:8; Heb. 9:26; Heb. 13:12). One recalls the [plaintive](#) cry of our Lord Jesus Christ which give us only a faint glimpse of His incredible suffering -- "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?" (Mt 27:46).

**By many convincing proofs** - Not just a few but **MANY** convincing proofs, which as noted below was used in the Greek world in a legal context as "proof from which there was no getting away, an indication which is irrefutable and indisputable." Peter and the other apostles and more than 500 witnesses had first hand evidence that Jesus was truly alive and this evidence was not open to question (oh yes, skeptics could "question" it but what the witnesses witnessed was not in doubt). In the Old Testament one only needed two witnesses to support an accusation but God goes way beyond that requirement when it comes to substantiating the veracity and

validity of the Resurrection of Jesus. [To wit, Jesus is Alive!](#) This would embolden the apostles to be fearless in testifying that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead, a belief that historical records say resulted in almost all of them being martyred. As **John MacArthur** says "The transformation of the apostles from fearful, cowering skeptics to bold, powerful witnesses is a potent proof of the resurrection." (Acts Commentary) [What would \(or perhaps better, what should\) happen to our fear and trepidation in sharing the Gospel if we really, truly believed in our innermost being that Jesus truly rose from the dead? Why do so few followers of Christ actually share with their lost friends that Jesus is alive?](#)

## THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The **foundation** of our faith

The "**fountain**" of our message

**Jesus is Alive!**

### Related Resources:

- [Why should I believe in Christ's resurrection?](#)
- [Why does it matter that Jesus rose from the dead?](#)
- [Why is the truth of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ so important?](#)
- [Who resurrected Jesus?](#)
- [Where does the saying 'He is risen; He is risen, indeed' come from?](#)
- [Why didn't the disciples always recognize Jesus after His resurrection? How can I avoid being a doubting Thomas?](#)
- [Can the various resurrection accounts from the four Gospels be harmonized?](#)
- [What is the significance of the "folded napkin" in Christ's tomb after the resurrection?](#)
- [Who Moved the Stone?](#) Frank Morson

John in describing the purpose of His Gospel wrote that "these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." (Jn 20:31)

**Convincing proofs** (KJV = [infallible](#))(5039)(**tekmerion**) from **tekmairo** = to prove by sure signs from **tekmar** = goal, mark, sign) describes a sign or evidence that removes doubt. **BDAG** says **tekmerion** is "that which causes something to be known in a convincing and decisive manner." **Thayer** - "that from which something is surely and plainly known; an indubitable evidence, a proof." **Luke is saying that the resurrection of Jesus is beyond dispute** This is the only NT use. There are 3 uses in the Septuagint but only in the Apocryphal books - 3 Ma. 3:24; Wis. 5:11; Wis. 19:13.

**Vincent** writes that **tekmerion** "is akin to **tekmar**, a fixed boundary, goal, end; and hence a fixed or sure sign or token."

**Cleon Rogers** adds that **tekmerion** means a "convincing and decisive proof. In **logic** demonstrative proof; in **medical** language demonstrative evidence, a sure symptom; in **legal** language proof from which there was no getting away, an indication which is irrefutable and indisputable." (New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek NT)

**Robertson - Tekmērion** is only here in the N. T., though an old and common word in ancient Greek and occurring in the Koiné (papyri, etc.). The verb τεκμαίρω [tekmairō], to prove by sure signs, is from τεκμαρ [tekmar], a sign. Luke does not hesitate to apply the definite word "proofs" to the evidence for the Resurrection of Christ after full investigation on the part of this scientific historian. Aristotle makes a distinction between tekmerion (proof) and sēmeion (sign) as does Galen the medical writer.

The **Gospel of Luke** ends with a description of the last of Jesus' appearances to the apostles **over a period of forty days** with a promise of the Spirit's coming and an allusion to His ascension...

While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and \*said to them, "Peace be to you." 37 But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." 40 And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. 41 While they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; 43 and He took it and ate it before them. 44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 "You are witnesses of these things. 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." 50 And He led them out

as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 51 While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. 52 And they, after worshiping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple praising God. (Luke 24:36-53-+)

## TEN RECORDED APPEARANCES OVER FORTY DAYS

**Appearing to them over a period of forty days** - Jesus was letting Himself be seen. Recall that He had kept some disciples from recognizing Him on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-15, 16-+), but Luke records that He "allowed Himself to be seen," (cf Lk 24:30, 31-+) by more than 500 witnesses. Many of these witnesses remained alive over the next 30 years during this crucial time when the events of Acts took place.

**Pentecost** means fiftieth - Jesus appeared for **forty days** and ascended. The Spirit of Jesus descended **ten days** later on **Pentecost**.

**Kistemaker** ([Baker NT Commentary-Acts](#)) gives a more complete summary of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances writing that "According to the four Gospel accounts, Acts, and Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, Jesus appeared ten times in the period between Easter and Ascension Day. He showed himself to

1. The women at the tomb (Matt. 28:9-10)
2. Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-18)
3. Two men of Emmaus (Mark 16:12; Luke 24:13-32)
4. Peter in Jerusalem (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5)
5. Ten disciples (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-23)
6. Eleven disciples (John 20:24-29; 1 Cor. 15:5)
7. Seven disciples fishing in Galilee (John 21:1-23)
8. Eleven disciples in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-18)
9. Five hundred persons (presumably in Galilee; 1 Cor. 15:6)
10. James, the brother of the Lord (1 Cor. 15:7)

**Bob Utley** has [another list](#) - Jesus showed himself to several people to confirm His resurrection. (There are more appearances listed but) Obviously some of these refer to the same appearance. Jesus wanted them to know for sure He was alive!

- 1. the women at the tomb, Matt. 28:9
- 2. the eleven disciples at the set meeting in Galilee, Matt. 28:16
- 3. Simon, Luke 24:34
- 4. the two on the road to Emmaus, Luke 24:15
- 5. disciples in the upper room, Luke 24:36
- 6. Mary Magdalene, John 20:15
- 7. ten disciples in the upper room, John 20:20
- 8. eleven disciples in the upper room, John 20:26
- 9. seven disciples at the Sea of Galilee, John 21:1
- 10. Cephas (Peter), 1 Cor. 15:5
- 11. the Twelve (Apostles), 1 Cor. 15:5
- 12. 500 brethren, 1 Cor. 15:6 combined with Matt. 28:16-17
- 13. James (His earthly family), 1 Cor. 15:7
- 14. all the apostles, 1 Cor. 15:7
- 15. Paul, 1 Cor. 15:8 (Acts 9)

The phrase **over 40 days** in Greek does not signify He was continuously with the apostles. The **NET Note** adds that "as the other NT accounts of Jesus' appearances make clear, Jesus was not continually visible to the apostles during the forty days, but appeared to them on various occasions."

**Robertson** adds on **over a period of forty days** - At [intervals](#) (dia = between) during the **forty days**, ten appearances being known to us. Jesus was not with them continually now in bodily presence. The period of forty days is given here alone. The Ascension was thus ten days before Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came. Moses was in the mount forty days (Ex. 24:18) and Jesus fasted forty days (Mt. 4:2, Lk 4:2-). In the Gospel of Luke 24 this separation of forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension is not drawn.

**Vincent on forty days** - The only passage where the interval between the resurrection and the ascension is given.

The phrase **forty days** occurs 22x in 22v in the Bible

Gen. 7:4; Gen. 7:12; Gen. 7:17; Gen. 8:6; Gen. 50:3; Exod. 24:18; Exod. 34:28; Num. 13:25; Num. 14:34; Deut. 9:9; Deut. 9:11; Deut. 9:18; Deut. 9:25; Deut. 10:10; 1 Sam. 17:16; 1 Ki. 19:8; Ezek. 4:6; Jon. 3:4; Matt. 4:2; Mk. 1:13; Lk. 4:2; Acts 1:3

**Constable** comments that "As 40 days of temptation in the wilderness preceded Jesus' earthly ministry (Luke 4:2-note), so He introduced His present ministry with a 40-day period of preparation. Jesus' baptism with the Spirit occurred before His 40-day test, whereas the reverse order of events appears here in Acts. God had instructed Moses for 40 days on Mt. Sinai in preparation for Israel's mission in the world. Now Jesus instructed the Apostles for 40 days in preparation for the church's mission in the world." ([Acts 1 Expository Notes](#))

**Speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God** - Notice the main topic of discussion. We do not need to speculate about what He spoke about because the Bible tells us clearly He spoke about the Kingdom of God. Why would Jesus be talking to the apostles about the Kingdom of God? The Jews were expecting that He would set up the Kingdom of God. They did not understand the "parenthesis" of the Church. They did not understand that He would return to defeat His enemies and set up the Kingdom of God. In Acts 1:6 even though Jesus had been speaking of the Kingdom, the apostles still seem not to understand and asked Jesus "**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?**" This was Israel's great hope, that Messiah would come and defeat Israel's enemies and set up His Kingdom. As discussed in verse 6 Jesus did not correct them. He did not say "You misunderstand. The Church will soon come into existence and it will replace Israel. All the promises given to Israel (such as the land covenants, etc) will be passed on to the Church." Is that what He said? Obviously not. And yet there has arisen an anti-Semitic false teaching in many in the evangelical world that the Jews disobeyed and rejected Christ and now the Church replaces the nation of Israel! This tragic teaching is referred to as [replacement theology / supersessionism](#).

**Kingdom** [\(932\)](#) ([basileia](#) from [basileus](#) = a sovereign, king, monarch) denotes sovereignty, royal power, dominion. **Basileia** can also refer to the territory or people over whom a king rules. See discussion of the different aspects of the Kingdom of Heaven/God. See different meanings of [basileia](#).

The **Kingdom of God** is the place where God reigns as King. Some have divided it into two basic aspects - the **universal kingdom** (God's sovereign rule over all creation) and the **mediatorial kingdom** which "refers to God's spiritual rule and authority over His people on earth through divinely chosen mediators." (MacArthur)

**MacArthur** summarizes the **mediatorial kingdom of God** - Through Adam, then the patriarchs, Moses, Joshua, the judges, prophets, and the kings of Israel and Judah, God revealed His will and mediated His authority to His people. With the end of Israel's monarchy began the times of the Gentiles. During that period, which will last until the second coming of Christ, God mediates His spiritual rule over the hearts of believers through the church (Acts 20:25; Ro 14:17-+; Col. 1:13). He does so by means of the Word and the living Christ (Gal. 2:20). The final phase of the mediatorial, spiritual kingdom will dominate the earth in the form of the millennial kingdom, to be set up following Christ's return. During that thousand year period, the Lord Jesus Christ will personally reign on earth, exercising sovereign control over the creation and all men. At the end of the Millennium, with the destruction of all rebels, the spiritual kingdom will be merged with the universal kingdom (1 Cor. 15:24), and they will become the same. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts 1-12)

## Related Resources

- If you would like to read more on the **Kingdom of God** see John MacArthur's [sermon entitled "Kingdom Parables"](#) in which he gives more explanation of the **universal Kingdom** and the **mediatorial Kingdom**.
- Alva McClain - [The Universal and Mediatorial Kingdoms of God](#) (article from his book "The Greatness of the Kingdom")
- Darrell Bock - [The Kingdom of God in New Testament Theology](#)
- John Walvoord - [The NT Doctrine of the Kingdom of God-part 1, Part 2](#) (Also [Kingdom of God in the OT](#))
- [Theocratic Kingdom Volume 1](#) - Propositions 1 - 106 (The [magnum opus](#))
- [Theocratic Kingdom Volume 2](#) - Propositions 107 - 164
- [Theocratic Kingdom Volume 3](#) - Propositions 165 - 206
- [Theocratic Kingdom Index of Scriptures & Subjects](#)

Also for more on the **Kingdom of God** see discussion of Luke 17:20-21ff...

"Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the **kingdom of God** was coming, He answered them and said, "The **kingdom of God** is not coming with signs to be observed; 21 nor will they say, 'Look,



here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the **kingdom of God** is in your midst."

The phrase **Kingdom of God** occurs 66x in 65v with most uses by Luke (31x in his Gospel, 6x in Acts)

Matt. 12:28; Matt. 19:24; Matt. 21:31; Matt. 21:43; Mk. 1:15; Mk. 4:11; Mk. 4:26; Mk. 4:30; Mk. 9:1; Mk. 9:47; Mk. 10:14; Mk. 10:15; Mk. 10:23; Mk. 10:24; Mk. 10:25; Mk. 12:34; Mk. 14:25; Mk. 15:43;

Lk. 4:43; Lk. 6:20; Lk. 7:28; Lk. 8:1; Lk. 8:10; Lk. 9:2; Lk. 9:11; Lk. 9:27; Lk. 9:60; Lk. 9:62; Lk. 10:9; Lk. 10:11; Lk. 11:20; Lk. 13:18; Lk. 13:20; Lk. 13:28; Lk. 13:29; Lk. 14:15; Lk. 16:16; Lk. 17:20; Lk. 17:21; Lk. 18:16; Lk. 18:17; Lk. 18:24; Lk. 18:25; Lk. 18:29; Lk. 19:11; Lk. 21:31; Lk. 22:16; Lk. 22:18; Lk. 23:51;

Jn. 3:3; Jn. 3:5;

Acts 1:3; Acts 8:12; Acts 14:22; Acts 19:8; Acts 28:23; Acts 28:31;

Rom. 14:17; 1 Co. 4:20; 1 Co. 6:9; 1 Co. 6:10; 1 Co. 15:50; Gal. 5:21; Col. 4:11; 2 Thess. 1:5

**Let me summarize the kingdom of God/Heaven in simple terms**(I confess this is my simplistic understanding based on a literal interpretation of the Scriptures) - Depending on the context of the passage, **the Kingdom of God** can refer to a **present** (in this present age), **spiritual, internal** ("in one's heart") **Kingdom** (in believers) and to a **future, literal, external Kingdom**, which is manifest first in the temporal (1000 year), earthly Messianic Kingdom (aka The Millennium) after which heaven and earth pass away and God creates His eternal Kingdom in the New Heaven and New Earth. Note that some writers say the "Messianic Kingdom" (which I have equated with the Millennial Kingdom) began at His First Coming. While I would not disagree with that interpretation, the caveat is that this aspect of the "Messianic Kingdom" refers to the spiritual, internal Kingdom, because Messiah never ruled as King over a literal earthly Kingdom during His earthly life. Messiah's earthly rule over His Kingdom will commence at His Second Coming when He will be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. Paul describes the final and forever "transfer" of the earthly millennial **Kingdom** to the eternal heavenly **Kingdom** in 1 Corinthians 15...

But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, 24 then ("after this") comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power (AT THIS TIME ALL THINGS WILL BE RESTORED AS GOD ORIGINALLY DESIGNED THEM TO BE! HALLELUJAH!). 25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet (THIS IS THE MILLENNIAL REIGN). 26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death (PEOPLE STILL DIE IN THE MILLENNIUM). 27 For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted (SPEAKING OF GOD THE FATHER) Who put all things in subjection to Him (MESSIAH - cf the "Messianic prophecies" in Ps 2:6, Ps 110:1). 28 When all things are subjected to Him (MESSIAH), then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One (GOD THE FATHER) Who subjected all things to Him (MESSIAH), so that God may be all in all. (1 Cor 15:23-28)

**John MacArthur** explains "Christ will rule. This is talking about the 1,000 year marvelous millennial kingdom on earth. Now watch, you say but after He rules, what does He do? 1 Cor 15:24, "then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father." That is the millennial kingdom phasing into the eternal state...the new heaven and the new earth....He gives it to the Father and that is what the Bible calls the eternal state, the new heaven and the new earth. No more rebels, gives it all to God. All things in the kingdom are under His feet...And so He (MESSIAH) squashes every enemy, and everything is subject to Him except God (THE FATHER) Himself, 1 Cor 15:27. And then He gives it all to the Father, 1 Cor 15:24 ("Christ turns over the restored world to God His Father, Who sent Him to recover it!")...**And what is the Kingdom that He gives to the Father?** Listen beloved, what is the kingdom that He gives to the Father? I will tell you what it is. It is people....**Redeemed people.** (In his commentary MacArthur adds "*The kingdom that Christ delivers up will be a redeemed environment indwelt by His redeemed people, those who have become eternal subjects of the everlasting kingdom through faith in Him...Christ will continue to reign, because His reign is eternal (Rev 11:15-±), but He will reign with the Father in trinitarian glory, subject to the Trinity in that way eternally designed for Him.*" MacArthur New Testament Commentary—1 Corinthians) (From sermon [The Resurrection Plan](#))

Dear reader all of this "erudite" discussion on the **Kingdom of God** can obscure the most important question - **Are you in the Kingdom of God?** Jesus explained to the Jewish leader Nicodemus how one (Jew or Gentile) can gain entrance into the Kingdom of God (first the spiritual kingdom, then the Millennial Kingdom and finally the eternal Kingdom of God where we dwell with God forever and ever. Amen!)

Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again he cannot see the**

**Kingdom of God.**" 4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.** (John 3:3-5)

**Comment:** Jesus instruction to Nicodemus tells us that the "key" that opens the gate (cf Mt 7:13+) to the **Kingdom of God** is the **new birth**. Paul explains how we are born again by the Holy Spirit -- "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Eph 2:8-9+)

Here are the other uses of **Kingdom of God** in **Acts**

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the **kingdom of God** and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.

Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the **kingdom of God.**"

Acts 19:8 And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the **kingdom of God.**

Acts 28:23 When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the **kingdom of God** and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.

Acts 28:31 preaching the **kingdom of God** and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.

**Kingdom of Heaven** occurs 32x in 31v and is used only in the Gospel of Matthew -

Matt. 3:2; Matt. 4:17; Matt. 5:3; Matt. 5:10; Matt. 5:19; Matt. 5:20; Matt. 7:21; Matt. 8:11; Matt. 10:7; Matt. 11:11; Matt. 11:12; Matt. 13:11; Matt. 13:24; Matt. 13:31; Matt. 13:33; Matt. 13:44; Matt. 13:45; Matt. 13:47; Matt. 13:52; Matt. 16:19; Matt. 18:1; Matt. 18:3; Matt. 18:4; Matt. 18:23; Matt. 19:12; Matt. 19:14; Matt. 19:23; Matt. 20:1; Matt. 22:2; Matt. 23:13; Matt. 25:1

**A T Robertson** on **concerning the kingdom of God** - This phrase appears 33 times in Luke's Gospel, 15 times in Mark, 4 times in Matthew who elsewhere has "**the kingdom of heaven**," once in John, and 6 times in Acts. No essential distinction is to be drawn between the two for the Jews often used "heaven" rather than "God" to avoid using the [Tetragrammaton](#). But it is noticeable how the word **kingdom** drops out of Acts. Other words like gospel ([euaggelion]) take the place of "kingdom." Jesus was fond of the word "kingdom" and Luke is fond of the idiom "the things concerning" (τὰ περὶ [ta peri]). Certainly with Jesus the term "kingdom" applies to the present and the future and covers so much that it is not strange that the disciples with their notions of a political Messianic kingdom (Acts 1:6) were slow to comprehend the spiritual nature of the reign of God.

**John MacArthur** comments "The Lord wanted them to know that the crucifixion did not nullify the promised millennial kingdom (cf. Isa. 2:2; Isa 11:6-12; Dan. 2:44; Zech. 14:9). The apostles no doubt had difficulty believing in that kingdom after the death of the King. The resurrection changed all that, and from that time on they proclaimed Jesus Christ as the King over an invisible, spiritual kingdom (cf. Acts 17:7; Col. 1:13; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:15; 2 Tim. 4:1; 2 Peter 1:11; Rev. 11:15; 12:10; 17:14; 19:16). The kingdom will be manifested in its fullness at the second coming. At that point our Lord will personally reign on earth for a thousand years." (Ibid)

**Related Resource:**

- [Theocratic Kingdom Volume 1](#) - Propositions 1 - 106
- [Theocratic Kingdom Volume 2](#) - Propositions 107 - 164
- [Theocratic Kingdom Volume 3](#) - Propositions 165 - 206
- [Theocratic Kingdom Index of Scriptures & Subjects](#)

---

**He Lives!**

He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs. —Acts 1:3

When the World Trade Center towers came crashing to the ground in a deafening roar of billowing debris, citizens of New York experienced what many people in other parts of the world had already known—the fear of terrorism. Subsequent attacks in other countries have heightened the concern that mankind may be spiraling toward self-destruction.

All the unrest in the world might make us think that our future is very bleak. We might even conclude that this is not the kind of world

in which to have children.

Yet one shining hope remains that can brighten our view of the future. Bill Gaither captured it in his song titled, "Because He Lives." The idea for it came to him in the late 1960s, a time of social unrest in the US and conflict in Southeast Asia. His wife Gloria was expecting a child, and they felt that it was a poor time to bring a child into the world. But when their son was born, Bill thought of the living Savior and these words came to mind: "This child can face uncertain days because He lives."

Two thousand years ago Jesus rose from the grave and gave "many infallible proofs" that He was alive (Acts 1:3). That's why we can keep going in the face of fear. Because Jesus lives, we can face tomorrow. By Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Up from the grave He arose,  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign.  
—Lowry

Christ's empty tomb fills us with hope.

---

### **Infallible Proofs**

He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs. —Acts 1:3

The Bible says that Jesus "presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3). This is more than a historic statement made by Luke. It is a challenge to all the critics who would deny the literalness of the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Luke made the amazing and startling statement that Jesus was alive, He was seen by a great multitude of people, and His resurrection was confirmed by a great number of convincing proofs.

Today, nearly 2,000 years later, no other doctrine of the Scriptures has been more persistently attacked than the bodily resurrection of our Lord. And no wonder, for it is the keystone in the great arch of all Christian doctrine.

With the resurrection of Jesus, the whole structure of Christian doctrine stands or falls. If the resurrection could be disproved, Christianity would crumble in the dust and have less credence than the wildest myths of ancient Greece and Rome.

The devil knows this, and so his earliest and most frequent attack on the truth of Christ is against His bodily resurrection. The credibility of our Christian faith rests on the "many infallible proofs" that Jesus is alive. By M.R. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Christ is the life, the empty tomb  
Proclaims His conquering arm;  
And those who put their trust in Him  
Nor death nor hell shall harm.  
—Anon.

Because Christ is alive, we need not fear death.

---

### **You Can Believe It**

He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs. —Acts 1:3

In 1957, Lieutenant David Steeves walked out of California's Sierra Nevada Mountains 54 days after his Air Force trainer jet had disappeared. He told an unbelievable tale of how he had lived in a snowy wilderness after parachuting from his disabled plane. By the time he showed up alive, he had already been declared officially dead. When further search failed to turn up the wreckage, a hoax was suspected and Steeves was forced to resign under a cloud of doubt. More than 20 years later, however, his story was confirmed when a troop of Boy Scouts discovered the wreckage of his plane.

Another "survival story" from centuries ago is still controversial. A man by the name of Jesus Christ walked out of the Judean wilderness making claims a lot of people found difficult to believe. He was later executed and pronounced dead. But 3 days later He showed up alive. And there have been skeptics ever since.

But consider the facts of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. His integrity is well-founded. Prophets foretold His coming. Miracles supported His deity. Eyewitnesses verified His resurrection. And today the Holy Spirit confirms to anyone who is seeking to know the

truth that Jesus is alive. By Mart De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Yes, you can believe it! Do you?  
I know that Jesus lives today,  
No matter what the skeptics say;  
The evidence that we must weigh  
Says, "Jesus is alive!"  
—Sper

The resurrection of Jesus is a fact of history that demands a response of faith.

---

## Forty Amazing Days

By Herbert Vander Lugt

[He was] seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. —Acts 1:3

During the 40 days between His resurrection and ascension to heaven, Jesus appeared again and again to His disciples. What an amazing and significant time that was! It seemed as if He came out of nowhere, then just as mysteriously He would vanish from their sight. He spoke to them about the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3), and even ate with them (Luke 24:43). These appearances were not some figment of their imagination.

When I was a boy, I used to ponder those mysterious events. Where did Jesus come from when He appeared, and where did He go when He disappeared? I came to believe that Jesus was able to slip from heaven to earth and back again during those 40 days. Then on the 40th day He ascended and disappeared into a cloud to remain at the Father's right hand until the time comes for Him to return (Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 1:20-21).

Mystery still remains, but I find comfort in the fact that the Bible records those events. They strengthen my faith in knowing that before Jesus' disciples began to preach the gospel, they were absolutely sure He was alive. They also reassure me that heaven is near at hand.

How wonderful to know that Jesus is alive and that heaven is only a step away! ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Jesus the Savior reigns,  
The God of truth and love;  
When He had purged our stains,  
He took His seat above. —Wesley

No matter where we are, Jesus is only a prayer away.

**Acts 1:4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me;**

KJV Acts 1:4 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.

- **Gathering them together** Acts 10:41; Luke 24:41-43
- **He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem** Luke 24:49
- **but to wait for what the Father had promised** Acts 2:33; Mt 10:20; Luke 11:13; 12:12; John 7:39; 14:16,26-28; 15:26; John 16:7-15; 20:22
- [Acts Video - 3 hours - Luke's Introduction](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-5 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur

## WAITING FOR THE PROMISE OF GOD

**Adrian Rogers** once quipped "You can save a lot of time — by waiting on God!"

**Gathering them together** ("eating with them")(4871)(**sunalizo** from **sun** = with + **halizo** = to throng, collect, gather) means to gather together (but the definition is more complicated - see below).

**NAS** translation has a marginal note = eating with; or lodging with. The **NLT** translates it "Once when he was eating with them."

Lenski comments on this difficult to translate verb - If the root is *hales*, the adjective meaning "crowded," "in a mass," we have the translation of our versions: "being assembled together"; but if the root is *halēs*, "salt," we have the marginal translation of our versions: "eating together," or more precisely: "while partaking together of salt." Rather decisive against the former meaning is the fact that the singular (THE VERB IS MASCULINE SINGULAR) fits only a collective noun, like a multitude, and never only a single person. Then, too, the tense (WHICH IS PRESENT MIDDLE/PASSIVE) should be the aorist, for the assembling must precede the commanding. Sense and tense are correct if we accept the other derivation, "**eating with them**," and we have in our favor all the ancient versions and the fathers plus also Luke 24:41–43, where Jesus did eat. Still we lack classical examples for this meaning

**Gilbrant** explains that "The difficulty rests on the interpretation of Acts 1:4: "And, being assembled together with them." Simple as it looks, rendering *sunalizō* "assembled together" in this verse creates certain problems. For example, it is difficult for **one person** to assemble (*sunalizomenos*, present middle participle **masculine singular**). The translators of the KJV realized this dilemma when they added the marginal note "eating together with them." This early marginal reading may prove to be a good interpretation of this text, since Luke does record that the Lord ate with His disciples after the Resurrection (Luke 24:42,43; Acts 10:41). The **NIV** reading "while he was eating with them" follows this understanding as well. (Complete Biblical Library)

**Friberg** on **gathering together** writes that **sunalizo** "is interpreted variously; (1) bring together, assemble; passive come together, meet with; (2) eat (salt, a[l]i) with; (3) stay with, be with (reading *sunaulizomenoj*); the first interpretation presents the least difficulties

**NET Note** on **gathering...together** - While he was assembling with them," or "while he was sharing a meal with them." There are three basic options for translating the verb *sunalizo*: (1) "Eat (salt) with, share a meal with"; (2) "bring together, assemble"; (3) "spend the night with, stay with". The difficulty with the first option is that it does not fit the context, and this meaning is not found elsewhere. The second option is difficult because of the singular number and the present tense. The third option is based on a spelling variation of *sunaulizomenos*, which some minuscules actually read here. The difference in meaning between (2) and (3) is not great, but (3) seems to fit the context somewhat better here.

**Keener** on **gathering together** "is literally "took salt together," an idiom for table fellowship. This act was the ultimate sign of physicality (in many Jewish traditions, angels could not genuinely eat human food) and intimacy (see Lk 5:29–32)." (IVP Bible Background Commentary)

**He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem** - Jesus uses a "strong" verb (described below) that conveyed the idea of binding the apostles to make the proper response to His instruction (i.e., to wait!). Their obedience would be to their benefit as their great need of power for ministry would be supplied.

**Commanded** (ordered, charged) (3853)(**paraggello** from **para** = beside, alongside, near by, at the side of + **aggelos** = messenger, **angelo/aggello** = to announce) means to hand on or pass on an announcement from one to another who is at one's side, such as to what must be done, usually with the idea of a command or charge. In secular Greek **paraggello** was a military term describing transmission of strict orders from a commander and emphasizing that the commanding was done authoritatively. **Paraggello** was also used in secular Greek as a legal term indicating a summons to court like our modern subpoena, and to disregard it made a person liable to severe punishment. **Paraggello** was used for a doctor's prescription or instruction to their patient.

**Paraggello** was used by persons in various positions of authority, (military commands, instructions of philosophers, doctor giving a prescription, judge issuing a "subpoena" - to disregard it made a person liable to severe punishment), etc. Every use of **paraggello** includes the inherent idea of binding the hearer or recipient in a way that they make the proper response to the charge or instruction.

Luke uses **paraggello** 14x out of 30 NT uses Lk. 5:14; Lk. 8:29; Lk. 8:56; Lk. 9:21; Acts 1:4; Acts 4:18; Acts 5:28; Acts 5:40; Acts 10:42; Acts 15:5; Acts 16:18; Acts 16:23; Acts 23:22; Acts 23:30.

**But to wait for what the Father had promised** - What does the Holy Spirit do? He brings God to us. When Jesus was on the earth, His name was **Immanuel-Emmanuel**, God with us. Now in Acts 1 Jesus leaves and ascends to heaven but the Holy Spirit will



soon come to bring God in the apostles. God **IN** us, is even more precious and incredible than God **WITH** us, as wonderful as that truth is! The Father promised the Spirit brings the very presence of God Himself into the bodies (temples) of sinful, redeemed men and women. That incomprehensible thought needs to be pondered lest we lose a sense of wonder regarding Who is in us as believers and the power we now have access to through the Spirit!

The promise of the coming of the Spirit comes brings the supernatural empowerment that He alone can provide for fruitful ministry (Acts 1:8-note). Jesus knew that supernatural ministry would need a supernatural source. But all the apostles could do at this point was to wait for the coming of the Spirit so that they would receive His power. As Jesus had told them in John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." The apostles were the branches, but they needed the "supernatural sap" of the Spirit of Jesus in order to bear true spiritual fruit, the only kind that would endure eternally (cf "that your fruit would remain" Jn 15:16). Beloved, this same spiritual truth applies to the ministry God has given to each of us. Jesus made it clear that "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." (John 6:63)

Father, I wait thy daily will;  
Thou shalt divide my portion still;  
Grant me on earth what seems thee best,  
Till death and heaven reveal the rest.

Isaac Watts

In one of His post-resurrection appearances to the apostles, Jesus had told them of His Father's promise declaring

And behold, I am sending forth **the promise (epaggelia) of My Father upon you**; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Lk 24:49-+).

**Comment:** Jesus had alerted the apostles that they were to "push the pause button" regarding beginning their ministry. They first needed to be "plugged in" to the Power Source for their ministry to have any supernatural impact. And the same can be said for our ministry beloved. We need His power for supernatural impact, impact that cannot be explained simply and solely by our human efforts.

**Spurgeon** on the gift of the **Holy Spirit** - If we have the Holy Spirit, we virtually have all good gifts, for the Spirit is the earnest of God's love, the pledge of joys to come; and He brings with Him all things that are necessary and good for us!

**J C Ryle** on the gift of the **Holy Spirit** - The **Holy Spirit** is beyond doubt the greatest gift which God can bestow upon man. Having this gift, we have all things, life, light, hope and heaven. Having this gift we have God the Father's boundless love, God the Son's atoning blood, and full communion with all three Persons of the blessed Trinity. Having this gift, we have grace and peace in the world that now is, glory and honor in the world to come.

Both **John the Baptist** ([click for these passages](#)) and **Jesus** both spoke of the **Father's promise of the Holy Spirit** in the Gospels (see Lk 24:49 above)....

Luke 11:13-+ "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will **your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?**"

**Comment** on **how much more** - his phrase in effect introduces a contrast. If it is true of the lesser, **how much more** of the greater. God is our Father ([pater](#)), our [Abba](#), our Dear Father! Think of sinful earthly fathers at their very best and multiply that by infinity, and you have it (Dads, are you as convicted as I am?) As fathers, few of us are perfect, but even the most imperfect of us are usually able to love our children. But there is a perfect Father in heaven Who is perfect love and so is a much greater Father than we are. His heart is pure and good and His love knows no bounds. It follows that His answers to His children's prayers are supremely good.

**Steven Cole** writes "Whatever our needs, our greatest need is to be filled continually with God's Spirit (Eph 5:18-+). So Jesus instructs us to come as needy children and ask the Father to pour out His Spirit upon us. Jesus' specifying the Holy Spirit shows that He is not promising to meet our every whim for material things or for earthly benefits. But He is promising that if something is for our spiritual good and we come as trusting children and ask, the loving Father will give it to us."

John 7:39-+ But this He spoke of the Spirit, Whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Ray Pritchard comments on the **Spirit** - Are you spooked out by the Holy Spirit? Perhaps I should say, "Are you spooked out by the Holy Ghost?" Lots of Christians are, you know. They say things like, "I know

about God the Father, and I know about Jesus, but the Holy Spirit is a mystery to me.” You may remember the story about the little boy who liked to scare people by saying, “Boo! I’m the Holy Ghost.” That story is apt because the Holy Spirit (“Ghost” is the older term) scares many Christians. Maybe they’ve heard things or seen things on TV. Or perhaps the idea of a “Holy Spirit” seems hard to grasp. We understand the concept of God the Creator, and we certainly know about Jesus who walked among us 2000 years ago. But the Holy Spirit is another matter. Where does he fit in?...One of the oldest prayers of the church contains only three words: “Come, Holy Spirit.” Here is the ultimate irony of this message. Because the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to see spiritual truth, we need the Holy Spirit to understand the Holy Spirit! So we pray “Come, Holy Spirit, and help us to know you better. Amen.”...The Holy Spirit brings the life of God to the thirsty soul. That’s what the Holy Spirit provides for us. He will fill our lives with living water. If we are thirsty, we are invited to take a drink and see for ourselves. Have you ever felt like spiritually “dry ground”? Have you ever felt “thirsty” for more of the Lord? Have you ever felt empty and needing to be filled? The Holy Spirit is God’s answer for our deep inner thirst. When He comes into our lives, He comes like a river rushing over dry ground. He pours out His blessings and our lives begin to blossom again. No one need stay “dry” or “empty” or “thirsty” forever. We weren’t made to live in a desert. God’s river called the Holy Spirit can flow through our lives, slaking our thirst, filling our emptiness, covering the arid ground with the water of life. ([Water, Wine, Wind, Fire - Keep Believing Ministries](#))

John 14:16 **“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper,** that He may be with you forever;

John 14:26 **“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name,**He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 15:26 **“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father,** that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,

John 16:7 **“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.**

John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and \*said to them, **“Receive the Holy Spirit.**

The Holy Spirit was also prophetically promised in the Old Testament

Isaiah 32:15 Until **the Spirit** is poured out upon us from on high, And the wilderness becomes a fertile field, And the fertile field is considered as a forest.

Isaiah 44:3 **‘For I will pour out water on the thirsty land And streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring And My blessing on your descendants;**

Ezekiel 36:27-+ **“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.**

Joel 2:28-+ **“It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions.**

**Anderson** summarizes the teaching of the promised Holy Spirit - John spoke of baptism, or immersion, in the Spirit, contrasting it with immersion in water that he practiced. John forecast the day when the Holy Spirit would be not only on men but in them. The Lord foretold the day when the Holy Spirit would stay with men, not for a little while, but forever. The Holy Spirit would never again be given by measure to God’s people, but in unlimited quantity. They were to be immersed in the Spirit of God, just as previously they had been immersed in water. (What the Bible teaches – Acts and James)

May the mind of Christ my Saviour  
Live in me from day to day,  
By his love and power controlling  
All I do and say.  
Katie Barclay Wilkinson

**To wait for** (4037)(**perimeno** from **peri** = about + **meno** = to remain) means to wait around, to stay in one place and anticipate or expect something. The thought of patience is predominant. Perimeno conveys the sense of to wait for and/or to expect an upcoming event, in this case the coming of the gift of the Holy Spirit. In classical Greek **perimeno** meant “to expect” (to look for as likely to occur or appear; look forward to; anticipate) or “to await.” There is only one other use of **perimeno** in the non-apocryphal Septuagint **“For Your salvation I wait, O LORD.”** (Ge 49:18)

**David Guzik** comments that “Jesus had nothing else for the disciples to do other than **to wait** for the coming of the Holy Spirit (the

Promise of the Father). Jesus knew that they really could do nothing effective for the Kingdom of God until the Spirit came. To **wait** means that it was worth waiting for. To **wait** means that they had a promise it would come. To **wait** means they must receive it; they couldn't create it themselves. To **wait** means that they would be tested by waiting, at least a little. ([The Enduring Word Bible Commentary – Acts](#))

Has God ever made you **wait** for something good, perhaps some promise in the Bible? It tests our faith to wait doesn't it? **Ray Pritchard** writes "As you **wait** remember that God doesn't keep time the way we do. "God never hurries. There are no deadlines against which he must work" (A. W. Tozer). **Waiting** is good for the soul, especially if you are **waiting** on the Lord. As you **wait**, remember that God has not forgotten you. You are on his mind right now. He sees you in your confusion, your fear, and your distress. Do not despair, but as you **wait**, rest your weary soul on the mighty promise from God in Isaiah...."

Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, 31 Yet **those who WAIT for the LORD Will gain new strength**; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary. (Isaiah 40:30-31-+)

**Promised** (1860)([epaggelia/epangelia](#) from **epi** = intensifies verbal meaning + **aggello** = to tell, declare) literally means to "tell at or upon" and originally referred to an announcement or declaration (especially of a favorable message). In other words, the first sense of **epaggelia** is that of a . declaration to do something which came to be associated with the implication of obligation to carry out what is stated and thus the meaning of a promise, pledge or offer. In Scripture, **epaggelia** refers primarily to God's pronouncements that provide assurance of what He intends to do.

**Epaggelia** in Luke - Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:4; Acts 2:33; Acts 2:39; Acts 7:17; Acts 13:23; Acts 13:32; Acts 23:21; Acts 26:6

**Guzik** on the **Father's promise** - It shows that we should wait for it with eager anticipation; a "Promise of the Father" could only be good. It shows that it is reliable; the Father would never Promise something He could not fulfill. It shows that the Promise belongs to all His children, since it comes from God as our Father. It shows that it must be received by faith, as is the pattern with the promises of God throughout the Bible. ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**"Which," He said," you heard of from Me** - Notice the Trinity - the Father promised (Acts 1:4), Jesus described the promise and the Spirit is the promise. One God in three Persons, all three involved in fulfilling the promise.

## In God's Waiting Room: Lessons from the "Down Time" of Life Sermon on Acts 1:4 Ray Pritchard

"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about." Acts 1:4

Have you ever heard of the American prayer? It goes this way: **Lord, give me patience, and I want it right now.** Patience is not a virtue our society seems to favor. We live in a world of frozen dinners, instant coffee, powdered orange juice, instant cameras, Cliff notes, freeway express lanes, cell phones, pagers, and beepers. Our motto is: Give it to me quick or forget about it! Few of us like to wait – it reminds us we are out of control. We don't like waiting in traffic, in line at the supermarket, at the airport, or when our computers don't work fast enough.

Dr. Larry Dossey, a Dallas internist, coined a term that describes this problem. People who hate to wait suffer from what he calls "**Hurry Sickness**," which he defines as "**an increased sensitivity to the passage of time.**" He believes that people suffering from Hurry Sickness die before their time. The good doctor offers the following experiment. You'll need another person to help you with this. Give your helper a watch with a second hand. Sit down. Have your helper blindfold you. While blindfolded, try to guess how long a minute is. Dr. Dossey says that to a person suffering from Hurry Sickness a minute lasts 15 seconds or less.

### "Tall, Glasses and in a Big Hurry"

I'm afraid I know more about this disease than I would like to admit. I've been in a hurry for so long that I can't remember when I wasn't. Twelve years ago I flew to Baton Rouge, Louisiana to lead a youth retreat. The man they sent to pick me up had no trouble finding me—even though he had never met me—because he had been given the following description: He's tall, wears glasses, and he looks like he's in a big hurry. I'm not the only

one who lives this way. People talk to me about having their plates too full, about living in the fast lane, about not having enough hours in the day, and running a race even a rat couldn't win. We want to slow down, but we're afraid the world will fall apart if we do. The funny thing is, one day we'll all slow down—permanently. And the world will go right on without us. **Hurry Sickness** is especially prevalent among highly motivated, achievement-oriented people. It often sets in around age 30 and gets worse with the passing years. What happens if it is left unchecked? Dr. Dossey mentions many physical ailments—ulcers, high blood pressure, tension headaches, high cholesterol, and lowered resistance to disease. The eventual payoff is a heart attack. What he doesn't mention is just as bad—**anxiety, a frustrated spouse, neglected children, a deteriorating spiritual life, and a short temper**. You do more, work harder, run faster and wind up in an early grave. It doesn't seem worth it.

### Most of the Life is Waiting

**Most of us would rather do anything than wait. Some of us would rather do the wrong thing than wait.** Truth be told, most of life is waiting. Waiting for an appointment to see the doctor. Waiting to graduate. Waiting to be accepted in college. Waiting for your first job offer. Waiting to see if the bank will give you a loan. Waiting for the right time to start a family. Waiting for your test scores. Waiting for your loved ones to come to Christ. Waiting for the Lord to bring the right man or the right woman into your life. Waiting to find out what God wants you to do. Waiting for someone to buy your house. Waiting for your prayers to be answered. Waiting for your husband to come home from a business trip. Waiting for your oldest daughter to come back to the Lord.

**Waiting is one of the hardest acts of the Christian life.** Thousands act who cannot wait. Yet we all spend a big chunk of our lives waiting for things to happen. For every green light, it seems like there are 5 yellow ones and a dozen red ones. We all have to wait whether we like it or not.

### Wait on the Lord

If you would like a fascinating Bible study, take your concordance this week and look up the word **wait**." Over and over again God's people were told to wait. Psalm 27:14 says, "Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD." In Psalm 37:7 we read, "Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him." When we are tempted to take matters into our own hands, Proverbs 20:22 offers this counsel, "Do not say, 'I'll pay you back for this wrong!' Wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you." Isaiah 30:18 expands on this theme: "For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!" Perhaps the most famous—and most beloved—verse on waiting in all the Bible is Isaiah 40:31, "They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

### Acts 1:4

With that as background we turn to our text—Acts 1:4. We have come to the few days of the life of Christ on the earth. We are in that mysterious 40-day period between Christ's resurrection and his ascension into heaven. Luke tells us that on one occasion the disciples and Jesus shared a meal together. The conversation turned to the future—to the time when Jesus would return to heaven and the disciples would be left with orders to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth. It's easy to imagine the excitement around the table that day. What do you want us to do, Lord? When do we get started? Let's draft a master-plan and hit the road. James, you and John get started on the mission statement. Peter, work out a 10-year strategy. Matthew, you're an accountant, aren't you? Run some numbers, let's see how much money we're going to need. We've got to get the ball rolling. Lord, where do you want us to begin?

His answer is simple—and quite shocking to these over-eager disciples. **Don't do anything yet. Go back to Jerusalem and wait there until the Holy Spirit comes.**" I'm sure this must have come as a major surprise. Here's a crucial insight: **When God wants to reach the world, his first step is to tell his people to slow down and wait for him. When the time comes, he'll give them the signal to move out. Until then, go back home and wait on the Lord.**

This raises a question. Why did the disciples have to wait for what God had already promised them? Why couldn't they just "name it and claim it?" From this text—and from the Bible as a whole—we discover **five reasons why God often tells His people to wait on him.**

#### I. To rearrange our priorities

Acts 1:4 says that Jesus commanded the disciples to stay in Jerusalem. I imagine that was the last place

many of them wanted to be. After all, this was the city where Jesus had been crucified. The men who put him to death a few weeks earlier were still in power. If they killed Jesus, why wouldn't they kill his followers? Certainly all the uproar surrounding his death would have made them even angrier. Jerusalem was no longer a safe city. If you were a follower of Jesus, any place on earth was safer than Jerusalem. Getting out of town was not a bad idea.

But Jesus commanded them to stay. If they left, it would show a lack of courage and reveal a fear of what man might do to them. It would also show a lack of faith—as if they could not trust an unseen Master to help them. It would mean leaving the battlefield and admitting defeat. This they could not do.

There is another argument they might have made. "The world needs to know about Jesus. Jerusalem already knows about him. This city murdered him. Let's go somewhere else and spread the Good News." That would be a good argument, it would also be wrong. In serving the Lord timing is all important. Haste gains nothing if the Lord is not leading. Their duty was to follow, not to lead. By staying in Jerusalem Jesus forces them to confront their fears and quells their budding enthusiasm.

Waiting is hard for all of us Type A action-oriented people who want to make things happen. There are times in life when God says, "Slow down. You're going too fast. I don't want you in the fast lane right now. Get off at the next exit and let's talk it over." When that happens our response is usually, "Go ahead and talk, Lord, while I drive down the road." Suddenly another hand takes the wheel and we find ourselves heading toward the exit. It is the hand of God using the circumstances of life to get our full and undivided attention.

Have you ever wondered why God doesn't speak to you more clearly? Could it be because you're going so fast that you can't hear his voice? Waiting rearranges our priorities, slows down our schedule, and forces us to listen to God.

## II. To test our faith

Jesus gave specific instructions in three areas: He told them what to do—**Wait**. He told them where to do it—in **Jerusalem**. He told them what to wait for—the **Promise of the Father** (the coming of the Holy Spirit). But he didn't tell them how long to wait. They had no idea whether they should wait a week, a month, a year, ten years, or for 40 years.

Some of you are in the same place right now. You're waiting and you don't know how much longer you can hold out. You feel like giving up and walking away from your dreams. You wonder if prayer is a waste of time because God has not answered your petitions. Perhaps you've been waiting for months or years already and deep inside you feel like giving up. Remember Abraham and Sarah who waited 25 years after the promise for the birth of Isaac. Remember also what happened when in a moment of weakness they took matters into their own hands and Ishmael was born (see Genesis 16:1-16).

### If It Takes Forever

This week I received an e-mail message from a friend in a distant state. After I read his main message, I saw this PS: "I think the Cubs are going to do some damage in the NL Central this year." I have no idea why he said that, but I've been hearing similar things every spring since I moved to Oak Park in 1989. Some of you have heard that talk for 40 or 50 years. How long has it been since the Cubs won the World Series? It was 1908, which means that it's been 90 years. When I had only lived here a year or so—and didn't understand the meaning of futility as it applies to the Cubs—I saw a sign on a hot-dog stand near Cicero and Addison in Chicago. The sign had the C symbol for the Cubs and underneath it these words, "If it takes forever." Now that's real faith. Cubs fans know all what waiting is all about. After last year they also know what it means to have your faith tested. But true fans never give up. In fact, the longer you wait the stronger your faith becomes. The same is true in the spiritual life. God makes us wait so that our faith will be put to the test. Do what the Cubs fans have been doing for 90 years—"Lord, I'm going to wait on you—if it takes forever." (Ed comment: Pritchard preached this message in 1998 and guess what happened 18 years later? [The Cubs won the World Series in 2016](#), their first since 1908! That hot-dog vendor's "faith" paid off!)

## III. To purify our motives

Very soon the disciples would be asked to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Vast responsibilities would fall on them. Great things were expected and great things required. Of all the dangers they faced, perhaps none was greater than the danger of pride. Unknown to them, in just a few days 3000 people would be converted at one time (Acts 2:41). Lest they think that everything depended on them, God makes them wait. As the days go on, the apostles learn that the Holy Spirit cannot be bought or sold, cannot be manipulated,



and cannot be commanded by human will. Waiting would force them into a position of humility—of beggars waiting for the promise of the Father.

Jesus knew that without the power of the Spirit everything else they did would be in vain. “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the LORD Almighty” (Zechariah 4:6, cf John 6:63). But with the Spirit all things were possible. The Holy Spirit would show them the truth, anoint their preaching, and through them draw sinners to the Savior.

### **All of us must come to that same place of utter helplessness before we can experience the fullness of the Spirit.**

God wants to bring you to the place where you know that you do not know. He arranges your life so that you understand that you do not understand. He wants to bring you to the end of your cleverness so that your trust will be in Him alone. Waiting purifies our motives because in the long hours while we wait, our pride crumbles and we realize that everything depends on God.

#### **IV. To increase our gratitude when the answer finally comes**

This point is akin to the last. The longer the disciples waited for the Spirit to fall, the more they appreciated the answer when it finally came. This is one reason our prayers usually are not answered the first time we pray. We would begin to take God for granted and to treat him like a celestial slot machine where we insert a prayer and out comes an answer. Because God is our Heavenly Father He makes us wait so that our gratitude might increase. Here’s an insight you may never have considered. When God puts us in a position of waiting on Him, the answer almost always surprises us. Consider the situation in Acts 1. The Lord Jesus told the disciples to wait for the promise of the Father—the coming of the Holy Spirit. For days on end they prayed, “O Lord, send the Holy Spirit.” They prayed in small groups—“O Lord, send the Holy Spirit.” They probably lifted their hands and prayed, “O Lord, send the Holy Spirit.”

Now they knew something about the Holy Spirit from the Old Testament—and even more from the words of Christ—but they really didn’t know what they were praying for. They certainly had no idea of what was about to happen on the Day of Pentecost.

I can imagine a conversation. “How much longer do we have to pray?” “I don’t know.” “Well, how are we going to know when the Holy Spirit comes?” “I don’t know.” “What if the Holy Spirit comes and we don’t know it?” “Stop talking and start praying.”

So there they were on the Day of Pentecost—praying, no doubt—not knowing when the Holy Spirit would be sent. One disciple says to another, “Hey, there’s fire coming out of the top of your head.” “What? Hey, your head’s on fire too.” Then came a noise like a mighty rushing wind. Suddenly one of them started talking in Greek, another in Median, another in Parthian, another in Egyptian, another in the dialect of Cappadocia—and none of them knew any of those languages (See Acts 2:1-13) It was a wild scene in Jerusalem as the Holy Spirit came with great power. **Their prayers were answered—but in a manner far beyond their expectations.**

The people who saw it thought the disciples were drunk. They weren’t drunk at all—they were filled with the Holy Spirit of God. He is the God of great surprises. He makes us wait so that He can surprise us in the future and increase our gratitude when the answer finally comes. (See Ray Pritchard's message - [How Can I Be Filled With the Holy Spirit?](#))

#### **V. To remind us that He is God and we are not**

Jesus told those assembled disciples two things that must have been hard to hear: 1) Stay in Jerusalem, and 2) Wait for the promise of the Father. Luke tells us he “commanded” them to do these things. This isn’t a suggestion or a negotiating ploy. This is a command from a superior to his inferiors. It is God telling his servants what to do. Because God is God and we are not, He often does things that make little sense to us. In the Old Testament He guided His people with the cloud by day and the fiery pillar by night. Sometimes the cloud would move for days on end. Then suddenly—without warning or explanation—it would stop. Then it would move again and then it would stop. No explanation given. The only command being, “Follow the cloud!” I am sure there were times when those weary Jews felt like shouting, “Why don’t you stop and let us rest?” Or when they had been several weeks in the desert, someone might say, “Lord, we’ve been here long enough. Can’t we move on now?”

There are times in the Christian life when God's only command is to **wait**. When those moments come, God rarely explains Himself or makes the big picture clear. All of this reminds us that in the end our God is sovereign and He chooses the times and places of life. He sets the path for each of his children and he doesn't consult us in advance.

#### Don't Fret Against the Lord

I know I speak to many who are waiting on God right now. What should you do? Here is my counsel:

Do not fret against the Lord

Do not panic

Do not take matters into your own hands

Do your duty each day as God shows it to you

Surrender your life to the Lord—"Thy will be done."

**But what should you do while you wait? Ah, what a perfectly American question that is.** We want to do something, not just sit in silence. Very well, before you get out bed in the morning, pray this prayer: "Lord, help me to do my tasks today with joy. Amen." Just do your job and do it with a smile while you wait on God. That will glorify your Father and will prepare you for whatever is to come. **The best way to get ready for tomorrow is to do God's will today.**

At its core waiting is about becoming more like Christ and relying on God. It's not that waiting is easy or enjoyable. Often it is very difficult. In the end we have this consolation—**God works through our waiting to make us like Jesus. It has been well said that we serve an on-time God. He's never early, he's never late, he's always right on time—which means that our waiting serves his purposes in ways we don't understand.**

Here is my final piece of advice. Do the best you can, and then sleep like a baby. Which is another way of saying, Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

As a way of applying this message let's change the American prayer to the Christian prayer: "Lord, I'm willing to wait for you—even if it takes forever. Amen." ([Acts 1:4 In God's Waiting Room: Lessons from the "Down Time" of Life](#))

**Acts 1:5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."**

KJV Acts 1:5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

- **for John baptized with water** Acts 11:15; Acts 19:4; Mt 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 1:31; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Titus 3:5
- **but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit** Acts 2:1-4,16-21; 10:45; 11:15; Joel 2:28-32; 3:18
- [Acts Video - 3 hours - Luke's Introduction](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-5 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur

### THE PROMISE OF BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

**For John baptized with water** - Jesus is contrasting two baptisms in this verse. The apostles were familiar with the baptism performed by John, but they had no clue about the coming baptism with the Holy Spirit. John's prophetic announcement of the Holy Spirit was recorded in all four Gospels (see passages below)

**Lenski** does not see "**for**" (hoti) in this context as a term of explanation writing "hoti (**for**) does not state the reason for awaiting the promise of the Father although it is quite generally so translated: "**for**" (meaning "because"), German *denn*. How could John's baptizing with water be a part of such a reason? This is the so-called consecutive ἡ τὴν (R. 1001), "*seeing that*." In view of the fact that

John began with water in order to have a greater than he finish by pouring out the Holy Spirit the eleven must stay in Jerusalem...John began the work with his baptism, Jesus was to finish at Pentecost.

**Utley on John** - All four Gospels (cf. Matt. 3:1–12; Mark 1:2–8; Luke 3:15–17; John 1:6–8, 19–28) tell of the ministry of John the Baptist. “John” was the shortened form of the Hebrew name Johanan, which meant “YHWH is gracious” or “gift of YHWH.” His name was significant because, like all biblical names, it pointed toward God’s purpose for his life. John was the last of the Old Testament prophets. There had not been a prophet in Israel since Malachi, around 430 B.C. His very presence caused great spiritual excitement among the people of Israel.

Most of us are not familiar with John’s baptism with water, so the question is what was **the baptism of John**? Below are several answers to help you understand the **baptism of John**...

**Gotquestions on the baptism of John** (Mark 1:4 “John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.”) – as John the Baptist preached repentance of sins in preparation for the coming of the Messiah, he baptized people in the Jordan. Those who were baptized by John were showing their faith in John’s message and their need to confess their sin (Mark 1:5). In Acts 18:24–25, a disciple of John’s named Apollos preaches in Ephesus; however, only knowing the baptism of John and the need for repentance, he needed to be further instructed in the death and resurrection of Christ. Later in the same city, Acts 19:1–7, Paul encounters some more followers of John. These disciples had been baptized for repentance, but they had not heard of the new birth or the Holy Spirit. Paul taught them the whole message of salvation in Christ, and they received the message and were subsequently baptized in Jesus’ name. (Excerpt from an interesting article entitled [What are the seven baptisms mentioned in the Bible, and what do they mean?](#))

**Darrell Bock on the baptism of John** - John’s baptism is unique to him and is grounded in his prophetic office. It is a call to commitment and includes a recognition that God is coming. It is neither the washing of a separated covenant community (Qumran) nor an initiatory rite (Gentile [proselytes](#)). Unlike traditional Judaism, it is not a religious act related to bringing sacrifices. Rather, it is an affirmation, a washing that looks with hope for God’s (**Ed**: Messiah’s) coming and lives in light of one’s relationship to Him (regarding this future looking and living see [Bock’s note below](#)). This attitude is much like the NT emphasis on a life of faith. (Baker Exegetical Commentary).

**Bock** continues to help us understand John’s **baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins** - The final characteristic mentioned about this baptism is its goal. It is directed *toward*, (eis, for), the **forgiveness of sins**. This statement could be read to suggest that some type of total forgiveness and efficacy is found in John’s baptism that makes the experience one of “becoming saved.” However, this understanding reads back more into the event than the time of the event and the presentation of Luke will allow. John is a preparatory figure (Lk 1:17+ = “*It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*”, Luke 1:76–77+; Schürmann 1969: 154–57). He prepares a people for God. Most importantly, John says that his baptism is nothing compared to the baptism that the Mightier One brings (Lk 3:16+). **So John’s baptism is a prophetic eschatological washing; that is, it is a baptism of promise that looks to the greater baptism of the Spirit** (Schürmann 1969: 158–60). **It points forward to the cleansing that comes to those who respond to Messiah’s offer with faith. This association of Spirit and cleansing was mentioned in the OT** (Ezek. 36:25–27+; Zech. 13:1+). The washing in the Jordan adds symbolism, picturing either repentance (Isa. 1:16–17+; Jer. 4:14) or divine cleansing (Ps. 51:7–9+; Isa. 4:2–6+; Ezek. 37:23+; Jer. 33:8+) or, perhaps, both (Nolland 1989: 141). If there be any doubt that Luke understands John in this prophetic and eschatological fashion, a glance at Acts 19:1–10+ ends any such uncertainty. Disciples who know only of John are to accept immediately the baptism tied to Jesus. Acts 19:4+ makes it clear that John’s baptism is not complete in itself, but points to faith in Jesus (also Acts 13:24+). Thus, John’s baptism represented for its precross Israelite audience a commitment to a new approach to God resulting in a life of fruitfulness for God and expectation of the eschaton....**In short, John’s baptism was a step on the way to the Promised One’s forgiveness. The repentance in view here will not only make one alter the way one lives, but also will cause one to see “the Mightier One to come” as the promise of God. To submit to this baptism is to confess one’s commitment to this perspective. This is the essence of John’s baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.** ([Baker Exegetical Commentary-Luke](#))

**John MacArthur** adds that “while there were various ceremonial washings in Judaism (cf. Heb. 6:2+), there was no baptism of Jews. But while there was no baptism of Jews in Judaism, the Jews did baptize Gentile

converts to Judaism (Gentile [proselytes](#)). Thus, those who “were being baptized by [John] in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins” (Mt. 3:6), were publicly acknowledging that they were no better than the Gentiles. Their sins had separated them from the true and living God (cf. Isa 59:2) and cut them off from covenant blessings. For Jewish people to place themselves on the same level as the despised Gentiles was astonishing, and demonstrates the power of John’s preaching. **Unfortunately, few being baptized by John were truly repentant.** The nation would later reject Jesus when He failed to meet their expectations of a political Messiah, who would deliver them from the Romans. Others were superficial from the start....**But those few** (Mt 7:13–14±) **who acknowledged their sinful condition and alienation from God and turned to Him in repentant faith were saved.** ([Luke Commentary](#))

**What was John the Baptist promising his followers when he baptized them?** John the Baptist was the forerunner of our Lord. As the last and greatest of the Old Testament prophets, he was announcing that the Messiah promised in the Old Testament was soon coming (Mt 3:2). Until Jesus’ baptism, he did not know for certain that, indeed, Jesus was this Messiah. **John’s baptism** was a baptism of repentance, an acknowledgement of sin, and of the need for the forgiveness of sins which Messiah (the “Lamb of God”) would bring about. The baptism was the symbol of their acknowledgement of sin, and of their need for a Savior. It was a preparatory baptism, but (as we see in Acts 19) it did not preclude the need for “believer’s baptism,” once they had come to faith in Jesus as that promised Messiah. This is why the church baptized new believers, and why believers today should be baptized as well. ([Bible.org](#))

**John Martin** - John’s **baptism** was associated with repentance, that is, it outwardly pictured an inner change of heart. The word “**for**” (eis) refers back to the whole “**baptism of repentance.**” The baptism did not save anyone, as is clear from what follows (Lk 3:7–14+). Repentance was “**unto**” (literal rendering of eis) or resulted in sins forgiven. Since John’s function was to be Christ’s forerunner, so also his baptism prefigured a different baptism (Luke 3:16+) ([Bible Knowledge Commentary - Luke](#))

As noted above **John the Baptist** prophesied about the coming baptism of the Holy Spirit, a truth recorded so important that it was recorded in all four Gospels...

Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ, John answered and said to them all, “As for me, I **baptize** you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will **baptize** you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Luke 3:15-16+)

**Comment** - John baptized them in the Jordan River symbolizing their outward confession of repentance. One can be water-baptized without being baptized with the Holy Spirit, and vice versa. Thus John’s baptism would only be external if it were not accompanied by heart change (see descriptions of John’s baptism above). The Messiah’s baptism however would be mightier, the result of supernatural power which could only be performed by God. Messiah’s “baptism” would be internal, for when a person enters the New Covenant in Messiah’s blood (Lk 22:20+), they receive the gift of the permanently indwelling Holy Spirit (see Paul below). This gift of the Spirit had been promised to the Jews in the OT in Ezekiel 36:27± - “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes (NOTE THIS DESCRIBES GOD’S PROVISION FOR A SUPERNATURAL LIFE), and you will be careful to observe My ordinances (THIS DESCRIBES OUR RESPONSIBILITY - only possible as enabled by God’s Spirit). (See the ["Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible"](#))

Matthew 3:11 (John the Baptist) “As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

**Comment:** Notice that in every one of these passages predicting the coming baptism with (or “in”) the Holy Spirit, **the One Who carries out this baptism is Jesus Christ.**

Mark 1:8+ (John the Baptist) “I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” (See Mark Commentary notes on baptism of Jesus)

John 1:33 (John the Baptist) “I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’

**Utley** on baptism as performed by the Jews in the first century - Baptism was a common rite among Jews of the first and second century, but only in connection with [proselytes](#). If someone from a Gentile background wanted to become a full child of Israel, he

had to accomplish three tasks: (1) circumcision, if male; (2) self-baptism by immersion, in the presence of three witnesses; and (3) a sacrifice in the Temple if possible.

**Steven Cole** - In the Book of Acts, this initial reception of the Spirit's indwelling follows the pattern of Acts 1:8. In Acts 2, the believers in Jerusalem receive the Holy Spirit. In Acts 8 and 10, the new believers in Judea and Samaria receive the Spirit. In Acts 19, believers in Ephesus (the remotest parts of the earth) receive the Spirit. Since then, every Christian receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation (1 Cor. 12:13; Ro 8:9-+; Gal. 3:2-5-+). But although every Christian has received the Spirit, we still need continually and repeatedly to be filled with or controlled by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18-+). This is also referred to as walking in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16 - Ed comment: I see walking by the Spirit as the conduct that comes from one who is filled with or controlled by the Spirit so that *filling* is not strictly speaking identical to *walking*, in my opinion) and it results in the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, rather than the deeds of the flesh (Gal. 5:22-23-+). The power of the Spirit that we need for witnessing is not just the power to speak the gospel boldly and clearly. We also need the Spirit's power to live holy lives. Our godly lives are the foundation for our verbal witness. If you are not denying ungodly lusts and growing in holiness (Titus 2:12-+), then please do not tell anyone that you are a Christian, because your life will bring disgrace to the name of Christ. I am not saying that you must be perfect before you bear witness. I am saying that you must be walking in the Holy Spirit, seeking to please God with your life, and forsaking all known sin. The power for verbal witness is not identical with being an effective salesman. An effective salesman may be able to talk someone into making a decision for Christ, but only God can impart new life to a dead sinner. We need to be clear and persuasive when we present the facts about Christ and the gospel, but the power to save a sinner lies with the Holy Spirit, not with us. Thus we cannot witness effectively for Christ unless we rely upon the Holy Spirit to produce godliness in our daily lives and to use our verbal witness as we have opportunity. ([Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#))

**Baptized** (907) (**baptizo** from **bapto** = cover wholly with a fluid; stain or dip as with dye; of a blacksmith tempering red-hot steel, of dyeing the hair; of a ship that "dipped" or sank) has a literal and a figurative meaning in the NT. The literal meaning is to submerge, to dip or immerse as in water. The main meaning of **baptizo** is to be totally identified with something, in this case, the Holy Spirit. The passive voice "be baptized with" indicates that God (Christ) did the baptizing and that the disciples were to be merely the recipients. This makes sense for the Spirit is God's gift and our part is simply to receive the gift by grace through faith in Christ.

A study of the 77 NT uses reveals that most of the uses of **baptizo** in the Gospels and Acts are associated with literal water baptism. The Baptism with the Spirit however is a figurative use that refers to spiritual baptism, not a water baptism.

Luke's uses of **baptizo** -

Lk 1:5; Lk. 3:7; Lk. 3:12; Lk. 3:16; Lk. 3:21; Lk. 7:29; Lk. 7:30; Lk. 11:38; Lk. 12:50; Acts 1:5; Acts 2:38; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12; Acts 8:13; Acts 8:16; Acts 8:36; Acts 8:38; Acts 9:18; Acts 10:47; Acts 10:48; Acts 11:16; Acts 16:15; Acts 16:33; Acts 18:8; Acts 19:3; Acts 19:4; Acts 19:5; Acts 22:16

**But you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit** - The meaning of the baptism of the Spirit is controversial and there is considerable disagreement among respected Christians. My comments will not solve the controversy and will not be an in depth treatment of this subject. What we can say for sure is that the baptism with the Spirit is the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4). It is a gift. We cannot do anything to earn this gift. God gives the gift and that is important to keep in mind. And as Acts 1:8 says, the reception of the gift of the Spirit is the only way the apostles can take the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

**Adrian Rogers** said it well...

Being **baptized** with the Holy Spirit — means He is now **Resident** in your heart.

Being **filled** with the Holy Spirit — means He is now **President** there.

The Holy Spirit never leaves a surrendered vessel unfilled or unused.

**Lenski** - When Jesus was baptized with the Spirit, when the Spirit was poured out upon him, Luke 3:22+ describes this as the coming down of the Spirit in a bodily form like a dove. There were different phenomena at Pentecost (sound of wind, tongues of fire), but the act was the same: the Spirit filled the disciples in a miraculous way and gave them great power. This is called "being baptized."

**Paul** speaks of the baptism with the Spirit in 1 Cor 12:13

For **by** one Spirit we were all (NO EXCEPTIONS) baptized (NOTE THIS IS PAST TENSE = A ONCE FOR ALL COMPLETED ACT) into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

In John's baptism, the water was the agent and John was the baptizer. Here we see the Holy Spirit is the agent (the active and efficient Cause, the One capable of producing a certain effect) of baptism but Christ



is the Baptizer. Note also that the Greek preposition for **B Y** is "en", the same Greek word translated **WITH** in Acts 1:5, and denotes instrument in both places. "Instrument" is defined as the means whereby some act is accomplished or something is done. So as one can be immersed in water, the believer is immersed spiritually into the Body of Christ. Note also that there is NT phrase "baptism of the Spirit" but only with or by the Spirit. So what is the point? The point is that it is not the Spirit Who baptizes, but it is Christ Who baptizes us into the Body.

**John MacArthur** adds - There is only one Spirit baptism, the baptism of Christ with the Spirit that all believers receive when they are born again. By this the Son places all believers into the sphere of the Spirit's power and Person, into a new environment, a new atmosphere, a new relationship with others, and a new union with Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 10:2, where Paul shows how the nation of Israel left Pharaoh and Egypt to become immersed and identified with a new leader, Moses, and a new land, Canaan). The pouring forth of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost also reveals that this baptism was by Jesus Christ (Acts 2:32-33), in fulfillment of John the Baptist's prediction (Matt. 3:11; etc.) and of Jesus' own promise (John 7:37-39; 15:7-15; Acts 1:5). We are not told exactly how this is done, any more than we are told exactly how God can give a person a new heart and new life. Those are mysteries beyond our comprehension. But there is no mystery as to the divine roles in salvation. The Father sent the Son and the Son sends the Spirit. The Son is the divine Savior, and the Holy Spirit is the divine Comforter, Helper, and Advocate. The Son is the baptizer and the Holy Spirit is the agent of baptism...It is interesting that those who advocate Christians' seeking the baptism by the Spirit in order to belong to the spiritual elite cannot seem to agree on how that is to be done. They have many ideas and many theories but no scriptural method. The reason is simple: Scripture contains no command, suggestion, or method for believers to seek or receive the baptism of the Spirit. You do not seek or ask for that which you already possess. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – 1 Corinthians)

**Ray Pritchard comments** - There is one Holy Spirit. He is the one who baptizes us into the body of Christ. Everyone comes to Christ the same way—by faith. Everyone is forgiven the same way—by the blood of the cross. Everyone comes into the body of Christ the same way—by the Holy Spirit. God doesn't have two ways of salvation, two methods of forgiveness, two bodies of Christ, or two Holy Spirits—one for the "minor" gifts and one for the "major" gifts. All true Christians share the same Holy Spirit. There is no secondary position in the body of Christ. Before you are saved you are outside of Christ. The moment you are saved the Holy Spirit places you "in Christ"—thus making available to you all the riches of the Lord Jesus Christ. When does the baptism of the Holy Spirit take place? The answer is, it takes place the moment you are saved. We believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs at the moment of conversion and is that act whereby believers are united with Christ as part of His body.

So at the time of salvation every believer is baptized by the Holy Spirit. This act places the believer into the Body of Christ. To reiterate, Scripture is crystal clear that EVERY believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. Paul could not have stated it more plainly when he wrote...

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But **if anyone** (ANYONE MEANS ANYONE) **does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him** (I.E., HE IS NOT A GENUINE BELIEVER IN CHRIST! THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS!). (Romans 8:9-+)

**In short, if you do not possess the Spirit,  
you are not a genuine Christian!**

**Ray Pritchard** goes on to ask

"how do we come into possession of the Spirit of Christ? 1 Corinthians 12:13 has already answered that question. The moment we are saved the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the body of Christ. We come into Christ and his Spirit comes into us. This means that when someone asks, "Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit?" if you are a Christian, the answer is always yes. If you answer no, you're really saying that you are not saved. Let me mention four things the Holy Spirit does for you the moment you come to Christ: (1). Born again by the Spirit—John 3:5. (2). Indwelt by the Spirit—1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (3). Baptized by the Spirit—1 Corinthians 12:13 (4). Sealed by the Spirit—Ephesians 1:13. These four things happen when you trust Christ and are **never repeated**. They are all performed by the Holy Spirit in the life of the child of God and are not related to any extraordinary emotional experiences. Should I seek to be baptized in the Holy Spirit? The answer is no. Nowhere in the New Testament are believers told to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We are exhorted to be filled with the Spirit, to walk in the Spirit, to quench not the Spirit, to make sure that we do not

grieve the Holy Spirit. All these things are ongoing commands for the people of God—and all should be on our hearts and minds everyday. But nowhere in Scripture are we commanded to be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

If we ask why there is no such command, the answer is not difficult to find. If you are a Christian, you were baptized with the Spirit the moment you were saved so you don't need to seek what you already have. If you aren't a genuine Christian, you don't need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, you need Jesus first and foremost. When you find Jesus, you'll get the baptism at no extra charge. It's like ordering a meal and then discovering that dessert is included in the price. The baptism of the Spirit is part of what it means to come to Christ in the first place.

One question might be asked. Why were the early disciples told to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit? The answer is simple: It hadn't happened yet. It happened for the first time on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. The church as the body of Christ came into existence on that day. Acts 2 marks the birthday of the Christian church. They had to wait for Pentecost in order to experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. But ever since then, no one has had to wait.

(That raises a side issue. What is the "sign" of the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Some people say it is speaking in tongues. But that only happened in connection with the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, Acts 10 and Acts 19—all three unique, never-to-be-repeated occasions.<sup>(5)</sup> Nowhere does the Bible suggest that all believers should speak in tongues. The most we can say is that tongues is a gift given to some believers—but not to all. Biblically speaking, there is no "sign" of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It simply happens to us the moment we trust Christ. Don't worry about seeking a sign. Just make sure you're trusting Christ for your salvation. That's the only "sign" you need.)<sup>(6)</sup>

**W. H. Griffith Thomas** - I believe baptism in the Holy Ghost is exactly on the same plane as baptism in water—we never need to repeat it.

**Bob Utley** - I believe there is only one initial spiritual baptism into Christ in which believers identify with Jesus' death and resurrection (cf. Ro 6:3–4; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:12). This initiating work of the Spirit is delineated in John 16:8–11. In my understanding the works of the Holy Spirit are: 1. convicting of sin 2. revealing the truth about Christ 3. leading to acceptance of the gospel 4. baptizing into Christ 5. convicting the believer of continuing sin 6. forming Christlikeness in the believer

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPIRIT BAPTISM AND FILLING**

Although Jesus did not describe **being filled with the Spirit**, Paul did in Ephesians 5:18+ writing "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." So many believers ask is **baptism with the Spirit** the same as **filling with the Spirit**? The Scriptures are very clear that Spirit baptism and filling are not synonymous. The saying is '**One baptism, many fillings.**' The moment we are born again, we are baptized with the Spirit, we are baptized into the body of Christ, the Church. But after we are born again, we have need to be repeatedly filled with the Spirit. Continual filling with the Spirit describes the normal Christian life and has nothing to do with spiritual maturity. New (spiritually immature) Christians can be and are commanded by Paul to be filled with (controlled by) the Holy Spirit. That is to be the normal Christian experience. And in Ephesians 5:18+ just as wine alters ones behavior, the "wine" of the Spirit affects our behavior. But we sin and we **quench** the Spirit (1 Th 5:19+) and **grieve** the Spirit (Eph 4:30+) and are in need to being "re-filled" (so to speak) with the Spirit. Sin causes "leakage" of the Spirit's power (so to speak), so we must confess our sins, repent of them, confess our need for the Spirit's filling and receive (yield to) the filling of the Spirit on a daily basis. The Christian life can **ONLY** be lived in the supernatural power of the Spirit, and not in dependence on our "natural" power. So the question is this --

"Is the Holy Spirit indwelling you in all his fullness? This is the most important question a Christian can face. The question is not, do you have all the Holy Spirit? but does the Holy Spirit have all of you? Until you yield your life to his control, you can never know what the Holy Spirit can do for you (AND THROUGH YOU)." (Ray Pritchard)

**Pritchard** summarizes his message on the **baptism of the Holy Spirit** with some practical application points...

Whenever I preach about the Holy Spirit, I am reminded of Robert Boyd Munger's wonderful little book, [\*\*My Heart, Christ's Home\*\*](#), in which he compares the heart to a beautiful house with many rooms. All of us have special rooms that we reserve for entertaining our guests. Most of us also have closets, basements and attics that we try to keep out of public view because they are messy or contain items we don't want others to see. The same is true in the spiritual realm. Many of us have welcomed Christ into a large part of our hearts. But

there are areas of life where he is not welcome to enter. We have “Presidential Palaces” in our hearts that are marked “Off limits to outside inspectors.” It might be the kitchen or the bedroom or the recreation room that we keep locked from public view. Usually there is some hidden sin—anger or bitterness or greed or lust or theft or jealousy or promiscuous behavior—that we would be ashamed for the Lord Jesus to see. Perhaps we don’t want him rearranging that part of our lives. Perhaps we like things as they are. But we will never be happy and Christ will never be fully at home until every door is opened to him. If you want to know the power of the Spirit, the price is simple but not easy to pay. You must open those hidden doors and allow the Lord Jesus to come in and make all things new. Will it be painful? Perhaps, but the hardest part is opening the doors one by one. If you have the courage to let Christ into every part of your life, he will come in and redecorate your life into something more beautiful than you ever imagined possible. But you’ll never know until you start opening those doors one by one. May God help us to unlock every door and open every hidden closet until Christ is fully at home in our hearts. ([The Baptism of the Holy Spirit: The Source of our Power](#)) (I would also recommend reading Ray Pritchard's answer to the question - [How Can I Be Filled With the Holy Spirit?](#))

**Not many days from now** - Jesus did not give them an exact time, but just a general promise that it would be soon. We know the time after the fact that it was ten days after Jesus' ascension, on the Day of Pentecost.

The following table shows the parallels between Acts 1 and 2–3 concerning truths about the Holy Spirit and eschatology. (from [McLean's article](#))

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ACTS 1 & ACTS 2-3	
Acts 1	Acts 2–3
The Holy Spirit will come (Acts 1:5, 8).	The Holy Spirit came (Acts 2:1–4).
The Holy Spirit will baptize them (Acts 1:5, 8).	Baptism of Holy Spirit occurred (Acts 2:1–4).
The power of the Holy Spirit will enable them to witness (Acts 1:8).	The Holy Spirit enabled them to witness (Acts 2:14–42; 3:12–26).
Jesus will come again in the same way He ascended (Acts 1:11).	Jesus will come again (Acts 3:19–20).
The Father has fixed the time by His own authority for restoring the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:7).	The Father will send Jesus the Messiah for the restoration of all things (Acts 3:20–21).

**Related Resources:** All of the articles below are from Dr John Walvoord and are highly recommended if you have questions about the Holy Spirit.

- [1. The Person of the Holy Spirit](#)
- [2. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament](#)
- [3. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament](#)
- [4. The Holy Spirit in Relation to the Person and Work of Christ](#)
- [5. The Holy Spirit in Relation to the Unsaved World](#)
- [6. The Work of the Holy Spirit in Salvation](#)
- [7. The Work of the Holy Spirit in Salvation](#)
- [8. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Believer](#)
- [9. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Believer](#)
- [10. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Believer](#)
- [11. The Eschatology of the Holy Spirit](#)

**Acts 1:6** So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

KJV Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

- **Lord, is it at this time** Mt 24:3; John 21:21
- **You are restoring the kingdom to Israel** Ge 49:10; Isa 1:26; 9:6,7; Jer 23:5,6; 33:15-17,26; Ezek 37:24-27; Da 7:27; Hos 3:4; Joel 3:16-21; Amos 9:11; Obadiah 1:17-21; Micah 5:2; Zeph 3:15-17; Zech 9:9; Mt 20:21; Luke 22:29
- [Acts Video - 3 hours - Luke's Introduction](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:6-11 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--2](#) - John MacArthur

## APOSTLES REPEATEDLY ASK ABOUT RESTORATION OF THE KINGDOM TO ISRAEL

**So when they had come together** - When they had assembled. When one studies the uses of this same verb (*sunerchomai*) in the Septuagint, it is notable that there are two uses which refer to the time when the **Kingdom** will be restored to **Israel**. ([see below](#))

**John MacArthur** addresses the disciples' repeated question about whether the timing of the Messianic Kingdom on earth was imminent writing that it was understandable from their perspective...

After all, here was the resurrected **Messiah** speaking with them about **His kingdom**. They knew of no reason the earthly form of the kingdom could not be set up immediately, since the messianic work signaling the end of the age had arrived. It must be remembered that the interval between the two comings of Messiah was not explicitly taught in the Old Testament. The disciples on the road to Emmaus were greatly disappointed that Jesus had not redeemed Israel and set up the kingdom (Luke 24:21+). Further, the apostles knew that Ezekiel 36+ and Joel 2+ connected the coming of the kingdom with the outpouring of the Spirit Jesus had just promised. It is understandable that they hoped the arrival of the kingdom was imminent. It was for **this kingdom** they had hoped since they first joined Jesus. They had experienced a roller coaster ride of hope and doubt which they now felt might be over. (Acts 1–12, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary [Chicago: Moody, 1994], 19–20)(Bolding added)

**So when** (*men oun*) - Is literally "indeed therefore," and is a favorite formula of Acts in opening a new story, which is nevertheless connected with what goes before. This specific phrase is used as an introduction some 27 times in Acts (only once in the Gospel - Lk 3:18). Here in Acts 1:6 the "therefore" picks up the thought of the introductory verses (Acts 1:1-5). This

Acts 1:6; Acts 1:18; Acts 2:41; Acts 5:41; Acts 8:4; Acts 8:25; Acts 9:31; Acts 11:19; Acts 12:5; Acts 13:4; Acts 14:3; Acts 15:3; Acts 15:30; Acts 16:5; Acts 17:12; Acts 17:17; Acts 17:30; Acts 19:32; Acts 19:38; Acts 23:18; Acts 23:22; Acts 23:31; Acts 25:4; Acts 25:11; Acts 26:4; Acts 26:9; Acts 28:5;

**Had come together** (4905)(*sunerchomai* from **sun** = with, together + **erchomai** = to come) means to get together for a specific purpose, to assemble, to gather (Mk 3:20; Lk 5:15; Ac 1:6; 16:13; 22:30; 1 Cor 11:17-18, 20; 14:26.) or to come or travel with (Lk 23:55; J 11:33; Ac 1:21; 10:23, 45; 21:16; 25:17) To come together, assemble, sexual union (Mt 1:18, 1 Cor 7:5), to travel with. **Friberg** - (1) come together; (a) of persons assemble, gather (Mk 3.20); (b) as a religious technical term, of Christians assembling in a congregation hold meetings, meet (1 Co 11.17); (c) euphemistically, as having sexual intercourse come together, live together (as husband and wife) (Mt 1.18); (2) go with, travel with (Acts 15.38)

**Sunerchomai** - accompanied(2), assemble(2), assembled(3), assembles(1), came(3), came together(3), come(1), come together(7), coming together(1), gathered(1), gathered together(1), gathering(1), go(1), gone(1), meet(1), went(1). Matt. 1:18; Mk. 3:20; Mk. 14:53; Lk. 5:15; Lk. 23:55; Jn. 11:33; Jn. 18:20; Acts 1:6; Acts 1:21; Acts 2:6; Acts 5:16; Acts 9:39; Acts 10:23; Acts 10:27; Acts 10:45; Acts 11:12; Acts 15:38; Acts 16:13; Acts 19:32; Acts 21:16; Acts 22:30; Acts 25:17; Acts 28:17; 1 Co. 11:17; 1 Co. 11:18; 1 Co. 11:20; 1 Co. 11:33; 1 Co. 11:34; 1 Co. 14:23; 1 Co. 14:26

Acts 1:21 "Therefore it is necessary that of the men who**have accompanied** us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us

**Sunerchomai** - 23x in 23v - Ex. 32:26; Jos. 8:30; Jos. 11:5; Job 6:29; Job 41:7; Prov. 23:35; Prov. 29:13; Jer. 3:18; Ezek. 33:30; Zech. 8:21

Below are two uses of the verb **sunerchomai** in the Lxx which are clearly in the context of the **restoration of**

## the Kingdom to Israel...

Jeremiah 3:18 (PROPHECY OF FUTURE REGATHERING IN THE "KINGDOM OF GOD" -This is the genre of prophecy which the apostles were surely aware of and which motivated their repeated questioning of Jesus about the timing of these events. - CONTEXT = Jer 3:15-18) "In those days (see Jer 3:17) the house of **Judah** will walk with the house of **Israel**, and they **will come together** (Lxx = sunerchomai) from the land of the north to the land that I gave (THE PROMISE KEEPING GOD IS SPEAKING!) your fathers ( NOTICE TO WHOM THE LAND WAS GIVEN! TO ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB. COULD IT BE MUCH CLEARER? NOTE ESPECIALLY THAT JEHOVAH MENTIONS BOTH JUDAH AND ISRAEL WHICH WOULD MAKE IT VERY DIFFICULT TO ASCRIBE THESE PROMISES TO THE CHURCH, WHICH SOME CALL THE "NEW ISRAEL" - ONE STILL HAS TO EXPLAIN "THE HOUSE OF JUDAH"! ) as an inheritance.

**John MacArthur's** note on Jeremiah 3:15-18 - It shall be in those days. When Israel repents (vv. 13, 14, 22), which has not happened, but will in the millennial era of God's restoration that the prophets often describe (Jer 23:5, 6; 30-33; Eze 36), God will bring these blessings: 1) shepherds to teach them the truth; 2) His own immediate presence on the throne in Jerusalem, not just the ark of His covenant; 3) allegiance even of Gentile nations; 4) righteousness; 5) genuineness in worship; 6) unity of Israel (north) and Judah (south) into one kingdom; and 7) reestablishment in their own Promised Land. (The MacArthur Study Bible)

Zech 8:21 (CONTEXT - Zech 8:20-22) (ALSO A PROPHECY RELATED TO THE FUTURE 'KINGDOM OF GOD') 'The inhabitants of one **will go to another** (Lxx = sunerchomai), saying, "Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go." 22 'So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.'

**John MacArthur** on Zech 8:20-22 - **Israel restored in millennial glory will be the means of blessing to all the world** (cf. Isa 2:2-4; Mic 4:1-5). Gentiles from around the world will make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to entreat the Lord. This signifies salvation of people from all over the world **during the kingdom**, fulfilling Ps 122:1-9. (The MacArthur Study Bible)

**They were asking Him - Asking is in the** imperfect tense indicating that the apostles were asking Jesus again and again about the Kingdom. Clearly the restoration of the Kingdom was "near and dear" to their Jewish hearts! It is important to note what the apostles WERE NOT ASKING Jesus -- they were not asking ARE you going to restore the Kingdom? They knew He was going to restore the Kingdom to Israel! How could they be so certain? They were certain because they based their assurance of the unchangeable promises of God, Who in the Old Testament again and again had promised to restore Israel to national prominence. It is February, 2018 and Israel is in the headlines continually (especially regarding the USA's announcement to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital), but that is not the type of prominence God promised (Here is just a sampling - Ezekiel 36:7-11, 12, 22-24, 25-27, 28, 29-32-commentary, et al) And even in the Gospel of Luke Jesus had promised the apostles "just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:29-30+, cf Lk 22:16, 18+). As Pritchard says "They knew that one day they would reign with Christ in his kingdom on the earth. That was a settled fact about which they had no doubts. It wasn't **IF** but **WHEN** the kingdom would be restored to Israel."

To help understand why the disciples were asking Jesus about the Kingdom it is helpful to have a background on what the Messianic hope of the Jews. Emil Schurer gives a detailed description (following is John MacArthur's summary from Schurer)

The nineteenth-century historian Emil Schürer summarized the Jewish people's expectations regarding the coming of Messiah and the establishing of His Kingdom as follows: **First**, the coming of Messiah would be preceded by a time of tribulation. **Second**, in the midst of the turmoil an Elijah-like prophet would appear heralding Messiah's coming. **Third**, Messiah would establish His glorious kingdom, and vindicate His people. **Fourth**, the nations would ally themselves together to fight Messiah. **Fifth**, Messiah would destroy all those opposing nations. **Sixth**, Jerusalem would be restored, and made new and glorious. **Seventh**, the dispersed Jews scattered all over the world would return to Israel. **Eighth**, Israel would become the center of the world and all the nations would be subjugated to the Messiah. **Finally**, the Messiah would establish His kingdom, which would be a time of eternal peace, righteousness, and glory ([A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ \[New York: Scribners, 1896\], 2:154-78](#) - First page of article on "[Messianic Hope](#)").

**William Barclay** explains that the Jews took the **Kingdom of God** "to mean that they were destined for special privilege and for world-wide dominion. The whole course of their history proved that humanly speaking that could never be. Palestine was a little country not more than 120 miles long by 40 miles wide. It had its days of independence but it had become subject in turn to the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans. So the Jews began to look forward to a day when God would break directly



into human history and establish that world sovereignty of which they dreamed. They conceived of the kingdom in political terms." (Barclay's Daily Study Bible).

**Homer Kent** - It is obvious from their question that **the kingdom** referred to was the one which the Jews looked for Messiah to establish (Isa. 9:6-7-+; Isaiah 11:10-12-+)...The reason why the disciples must not concern themselves with pinpointing the inaugurating of Israel's restored kingdom was that they had a new task to perform. They were to be Christ's witnesses after the empowering of the Holy Spirit had occurred. They were to testify to the person of Christ, his teachings, his sacrificial death and his resurrection.(Jerusalem to Rome: Studies in the Book of Acts)

**John Stott** - It appears, then, that Jesus' two main topics of conversation between his resurrection and his ascension were the kingdom of God and the Spirit of God. It seems probably that he also related them to each other, for certainly the prophets had often associated them. When God establishes the kingdom of the Messiah, they said, He will pour out his Spirit; this generous effusion and universal enjoyment of the Spirit will be one of the major signs and blessings of His rule; and indeed the Spirit of God will make the rule of God a living and present reality to His people. ([The Message of Acts](#)) (**Ed comment:** And while Pentecost was a foretaste, it was not the final, full fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28-29-+. That would come about at His Second Coming when all Israel who believe in Him will be saved. Ro 11:26-27-+, Zech 12:10-14-+, Zech 13:1-+, Zech 13:8-9-+).

**Ray Pritchard** observes that "Many commentators over the years have upbraided the disciples for asking this question as if it reflected a kind of carnal spirituality. But as I have mentioned, they had a sound biblical reason for supposing that the kingdom was at hand. We can add several other positive points as well. First, this question represented a strong faith in Jesus—that he was the Sovereign Lord who had the power to establish his kingdom on the earth. You wouldn't ask such a question to any other than the Son of God. Second, it came from zeal to see God's kingdom established and the glory of the Lord fill the earth as the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14-+). I can understand that, can't you? When I consider how evil has reared its ugly head and perversion rules the day in Oak Park, I want to cry out, "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus!" Third, it stems from genuine grief over the coming departure of the Lord. When a father is about to leave on a business trip, his little children will sometimes tug on his pants and say, "Daddy, don't leave. Stay with us." By asking the question, the disciples were saying "Lord, why don't you just go ahead and start your kingdom now? That way you wouldn't have to leave at all." They loved Jesus and didn't want to see him go back to heaven. I can't say that I blame them at all...**What's wrong with the question then?** It was wrong because they were asking for something that was none of their business. Jesus had told them the what, they wanted to know the when. There are three problems here: The **first** is carnal impatience that is unwilling to wait for God's plan to unfold. The **second** is improper curiosity from prying into things that belong to God alone. The **third** is spiritual indolence in which the pious fold their hands looking at the clouds instead of working in the harvest fields for the Master. So the question, though understandable, is still wrong, not in what it presumes—that Jesus will one day return and set up his kingdom on the earth—but in what it asks—when are you going to do it?" ([Is It the Time Yet?](#))

**Asking** (2065)([erotao](#)) means to ask with as an authoritative command but rather as a friend making an urgent appeal to a friend. The term suggests that those making the request stand in a position of familiarity with those being treated, which was clearly the case with the apostles and the Lord.

**Wiersbe** - Jesus did not rebuke them when they "kept asking" about the future Jewish kingdom (Acts 1:7). After all, He had opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:44), so they knew what they were asking.

**John McLean** has a well done discussion answering the question '[Did Jesus Correct the Disciples' View of the Kingdom?](#)' ([Bibliotheca Sacra - 151, April, 1994](#)). The interested reader is directed to that article for McLean's in depth answer (to read the full article does require a small fee of \$5/month). Here is McClean's conclusion -

Throughout the Gospels Jesus corrected the disciples' and others' false ideas on a number of occasions. **But He did not correct the disciples in Acts 1:6–8; therefore it must be concluded that their perception of a future kingdom was correct. The disciples' conceived of a future national kingdom for ethnic Israel in which they will reign with Christ.** This restoration was shaped by the writings of the Old Testament Law and the Prophets, which anticipated a fulfillment of the Davidic kingdom that will be literal, political, geographical, and national. Peter's sermon in Acts 3:12–26+ evidences his continued belief that this national kingdom would be restored. Therefore believers should anticipate not only the second coming of Jesus Christ but also His establishment of a future kingdom for the nation Israel.

**McLean** adds that "Even **Lenski**, (EXCELLENT LUTHERAN COMMENTATOR) who does not accept a future for national Israel, maintains that the disciples thought of a glorious earthly rule for Israel, the Jewish people, through Jesus, the Messiah, when He would return." Here is Lenski's statement...

The fact that the kingdom is, indeed, to be restored to Israel is taken for granted. The scepter had, indeed, sadly departed from Judah—would it now be restored in Shiloh, in Jesus? Luke 24:21: "But we trusted that it

had been he which should have redeemed Israel." There is a difficulty to determine exactly what the apostles had in mind when they asked this question. **We venture to say that they thought of a glorious earthly rule for Israel, the Jewish people, through Jesus, the Messiah, who would soon return in his Parousia.**

It is interesting that **Bob Utley** who likewise does not accept a future for national Israel makes a similar statement regarding the apostles' question writing that "**The OT prophets predict a restoration of a Jewish kingdom in Palestine centered in Jerusalem where all the nations of the earth gather to praise and serve a Davidic ruler.**" ([Utley's remarks](#) - Roman numeral I, letter E) This is an amazing "admission" of the truth of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the nation of Israel by a writer who firmly disavows any future for the nation! [As discussed below](#) Utley bases his conclusion on his understanding of progressive revelation (which I think is clearly flawed).

**Lange** (a German theologian in the 1800's) commented on **the Kingdom** - The kingdom which is the object of their hope, is a **kingdom of Israel, a theocratic kingdom**, deriving its existence and reality from the Messiah, and intended to give liberty, greatness and dominion **to the people of Israel**, who were at the time oppressed by a heavy yoke. The apostles believe that they are almost authorized by the words now pronounced by the Lord, to hope for an early restoration of this kingdom. (Comment: So here is a writer who is not a "dispensationalist" who reads the text literally and interprets the apostles' question as referring to a kingdom in which literal Israel would be the head nation. A far cry from modern [replacement theologians](#) who are forced to allegorize or spiritualize numerous passages related to the nation of Israel.)

#### Related Resource:

- [Background on Mystery of the Kingdom and how it relates to Israel's Rejection of Her King and the future return of the King and establishment of His Visible, External Kingdom](#) - This topic can be confusing, but John MacArthur gives a simple, but excellent explanation of the "mystery phase" of the Kingdom of Heaven/God. It will help you understand Peter's offer to the Jews of "**the times of refreshing**" (Acts 3:19+) and "**the period of restoration**" (Acts 3:21+).. If you have been taught that God is finished with the nation of Israel then you need to study these passages and like a Berean see whether you think John MacArthur is correct in his assessment!

**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?**- They are asking if this was the time the kingdom would be restored to its former state. Notice that these Jews expected a literal kingdom and now that Jesus had been resurrected they undoubtedly anticipated that He would now establish His reign as prophesied in the OT (cf Jer 23:5-6). Their question reminds me of a similar question in Mt 24:3 "As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" That question was followed by Jesus' Olivet Discourse!

As Jesus was leaving Jericho for His final 17 mile, 6 hour journey to Jerusalem, He taught the disciples and all of those following Him a parable. He introduces the parable by explaining the reason for this particular parable at this particular time...

While they were listening to these things (MESSIAH'S MISSION = Lk 19:10+ and Lk 19:1-9), Jesus went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they (THE JEWS) **supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.** (Lk 19:11+)

**Comment:** Beloved, could it be stated any clearer? The Jews were looking expectantly for Jesus to be the true Messiah, the One Who the OT had predicted would come and establish His **Kingdom** on earth and restore Israel to global prominence. (For more discussion on **the Kingdom of God** which the Jews were expecting [see commentary](#) on Luke 19:11ff+).

**Lord** (master, owner)(2962)(**kurios** from **kuros** = might or power, related to **kuroo** = to give authority) primarily means the possessor, owner, master, the supreme one, one who is sovereign (used this way of Roman emperors - Act 25:26) and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership and uncontested power. **Kurios** is used of the one to whom a person or thing belonged, over which he has the power of deciding, the one who is the master or disposer of a thing (Mk 7:28) The NT authors used **KURIOS** to describe the full deity of Christ (cf Ro 10:9-13+).

**Lenski on kurios** - In the Gospels **kurios** is often only a form of address that indicates respect, but beginning with Luke 7:13 we find the title used as it has ever since been employed in the church in the sense of divine Lord which includes the deity of Jesus and the grace and the redemption which made him our Lord. We shall thus continue to meet "the Lord," "the Lord Jesus," "our Lord Jesus Christ," etc.

**Moody Bible Commentary** - The apostles naturally interpreted Jesus' teaching as referring to the full and immediate establishment of the messianic kingdom for Israel, promised for the Jewish people in the Hebrew Scriptures (see Isaiah 2:2-4+; Jeremiah 31:27-34+; Amos 9:11-15). The disciples correctly understood that the promises made to Israel about the restoration of the kingdom

under the Messiah were not fulfilled in the fullest sense by the church.

**J Vernon McGee** has an interesting comment - You will find that **some of the commentators rebuke the apostles** for asking this question—they feel the apostles made a mistake. I believe that the answer the Lord gives them indicates they made no mistake (Acts 1:7). Their question was a legitimate question, a natural question, and one that our Lord answered as such. **He did not rebuke them. He did not call it a foolish question.** The apostles were brought up and schooled in the Old Testament. They had waited for the coming of the Messiah. They understood that the Messiah is the One who will establish the **kingdom upon this earth**. That was their hope. It is still the hope for this earth. God is not through with this earth (nor is He finished with Israel!). God does not intend to sweep this earth under the rug. Although it is small enough to be swept under His rug, He is not going to do that. God has an eternal purpose for the earth. It was the **kingdom of God** that they talked about, which involves the re-establishment of the house of David. These were the things He talked about after His resurrection—we see in Acts 1:3 that He spoke of things “pertaining to the kingdom of God.”

**McLean** notes that "Even Lenski, who does not accept a future for national Israel, maintains that the disciples thought of a glorious earthly rule for Israel, the Jewish people, through Jesus, the Messiah, when He would return. Jesus answered only regarding the times and the seasons and did not explain the kingdom (see v. 3) and how Israel (the remnant, Rom 9:27; 11:5) would have the kingdom restored. The fact that the apostles still expressed strong earthly conceptions by their question can scarcely be denied.

**Restoring** (600)(**apokathistemi** from **apo** = from + **kathistemi** = to set in order, appoint) means literally to restore to an earlier condition. Meanings include to restore, to give or bring back, to reinstate. To return to a former condition, place or position. **Apokathistemi** in secular Greek was a medical technical term for restoring to health (to cure) (Mt 12:13, Mk 3:5, 8:5, Lk 6:10) In Mt 17:11 and Mk 9:12 Jesus told His disciples that "Elijah is coming and will restore all things." (see comments below).

**Rogers** says **apokathistemi** is an "eschatological term for the restoration of the right order through God in the end time." (New Linguistic and Exegetical Key).

The apostles surely were familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures which promised restoration of the Kingdom. Below are just a few of the many Old Testament passages that they could have referenced if Jesus had asked them to give Biblical support for their belief. Notice He does not accuse them of being too literal in their interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies that referred to the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel!

Isaiah 1:26-+ "Then **I will restore your judges as at the first**, And your counselors as at the beginning; After that you will be called the city of righteousness, A faithful city (Jerusalem)."

Isaiah 9:6-7-+ For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, **On the throne of David and over his kingdom**, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

Isaiah 35:1-10-+ (**CONTEXT** - A DESCRIPTION OF THE CONDITIONS THAT WILL PREVAIL DURING THE RESTORED 1000 YEAR KINGDOM BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE RETURN OF OUR MESSIAH) The wilderness and the desert will be glad, And the Arabah will rejoice and blossom; Like the crocus 2 It will blossom profusely And rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, The majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the LORD, The majesty of our God. 3 Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble. 4 Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; The recompense of God will come, But He will save you." 5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. 6 Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness And streams in the Arabah. 7 The scorched land will become a pool And the thirsty ground springs of water; In the haunt of jackals, its resting place, Grass becomes reeds and rushes. 8 A highway will be there, a roadway, And it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, But it will be for him who walks that way, And fools will not wander on it. 9 No lion will be there, Nor will any vicious beast go up on it; These will not be found there. But the redeemed will walk there, 10 And the ransomed of the LORD will return And come with joyful shouting to Zion, With everlasting joy upon their heads. They will find gladness and joy, And sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Jeremiah 23:5 "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "**When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land.** 6 "In His days **Judah** will be saved, And **Israel** will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'

**Comment:** This is not a reference to heaven. The promise to dwell securely speaks of the nation of Israel on the earth. This statement would be superfluous if Jeremiah were describing Heaven. Mention of **Judah** (2 southern tribes taken into Babylonian exile in 605, 597 and 586 BC) and **Israel** (10 northern tribes taken into Assyrian exile in 722 BC) together indicates this is a reference to the united nation of Israel, which awaits a future fulfillment **in His days** (when [Messiah returns](#)). This cannot refer to the reborn (May, 1948) nation of Israel for it clearly does not dwell securely. I love the Name for it speaks of what He will accomplish in the believing remnant of Israel when He returns -- they will become righteous by grace through faith and recognize that it is not **their** works based righteousness that makes them acceptable to the Father, but it is as they will proclaim the "LORD **our** righteousness." Not their righteousness but His. They are safe forever in Christ and His perfect righteousness as is every believer whether Jew or Gentile. Notice that if one holds to the [false teaching that the Church has replaced Israel](#) in respect to the OT promises given to the literal nation of Israel, this passage creates a difficult with that genre of interpretation. Why? Because the promise is given also to Judah (see [Israel of God](#)).

Jeremiah 29:14 (Read the preceding context Jer 29:11-13) 'And I will be found by you,' declares the LORD, 'and **I will restore your fortunes** and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.'

**MacArthur** - The Lord would answer their prayer, by returning the Jews to their land, cf. Daniel's example and God's response (Da 9:4-23, Da 9:24-27+). Fulfillment would occur in the era of Ezra and Nehemiah, and beyond this in even fuller measure after the Second Advent of their Messiah (cf. Da 2:35, 45-+; Da 7:13, 14-+, Da 7:27-+; Da 12:1-3, 13-+).

**Charles Dyer** - Once they had turned back to the Lord, He would gather them from all the nations where they had been banished and restore them to their land (Jeremiah 29:14). The Jewish people did not return from Babylon because of spiritual revival, but because of Cyrus's decree (**Ed:** 2Chr 36:23, Ezra 1:1). However, in the future **the whole people of Israel** will call upon the Lord and recognize Jesus as their Savior (Zech 12:10+) (**Ed:** I would qualify this statement by Dyer -- not **all** Israel will be saved for 2/3's will perish as stated in Zech 13:8,9-+. Only 1/3 would call on Messiah and be saved -- this 1/3 is part of the **believing Jewish remnant**). This restoration is from **all the nations**, so it seems to look beyond the return from Babylonian exile to the future regathering of Israel at the end of days when Messiah will establish His kingdom (**Ed: Excellent, irrefutable point!**). The purpose of casting Israel out of their land, whether to Babylon or after the Roman expulsion, was more than judgment for sin. The larger purpose was to force Israel back to her God (cf. Deut 30:1-10-+, **Ed:** cp the idea of the purging wrought by the "Refinier's fire" in Da 12:10-+). Whenever we face difficulties in our lives, we must remember God has a good plan for us, a plan that includes even the difficulties themselves (cp Ge 50:20, Ro 8:28-+). We should call on Him, pray to Him, and know that He is listening. Instead of being angry and shutting God out when we encounter trials, we should seek Him with our whole heart, keep reading the Bible, stay in fellowship in our local church, and anticipate a good outcome from the Lord (Jeremiah 29:11-14; Romans 8:28-+; James 1:2-4-+; Hebrews 10:19-25-+). ([Moody Bible Commentary](#)) (**Bolding** added for emphasis)

Jeremiah 33:15-17-+ 'In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch of David to spring forth (THE MESSIAH - SECOND COMING) and He shall execute justice and righteousness (Rev 19:15+) on the earth (WHERE? THE LITERAL EARTH, NOT THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH FOR THERE WILL BE NO NEED TO EXECUTE JUSTICE THERE, FOR ALL WILL BE PERFECT!). 16 'In those days (WHAT DAYS? WHEN MESSIAH RETURNS) Judah will be saved (AS PROMISED IN Ro 11:26-27-+, cf Zech 12:10-14-+, Zech 13:1-+, Zech 13:8-9-+) and Jerusalem will dwell in safety (THIS PROMISE HAS NOT BEEN FULFILLED - Zech 14:8-11-+); and this is the name by which she will be called: the LORD is our righteousness.' 17 "For thus says the LORD, 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel;

Jeremiah 33:26-+ then I would reject the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, not taking from his descendants rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But **I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them.**"

**Comment:** See also discussion of Restore the Fortunes of Judah and Israel

Amos 9:11-15+ "In that day (WHAT DAY? THIS REFERS TO THE EVENTS IN THE DAY OF THE LORD) I will

raise up the fallen booth of David, And wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins And rebuild it as in the days of old (THIS WILL BE FULFILLED IN THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM WHEN THE KING RETURNS TO TAKE HIS THRONE IN JERUSALEM); 12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom (PASSAGES LIKE THIS COULD HARDLY BE INTERPRETED AS REFERRING TO HEAVEN!) And all the nations who are called by My name," Declares the LORD who does this. 13 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "When the plowman will overtake the reaper And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; When the mountains will drip sweet wine And all the hills will be dissolved. 14 "Also **I will restore the captivity of My people Israel** (NOTE: THIS IS A LITERAL PROPHECY TO A LITERAL NATION. IT IS NOT A PROMISE TO THE CHURCH!), And they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them (AGAIN THIS REFERS TO LIFE ON EARTH, NOT HEAVEN); They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, And make gardens and eat their fruit. 15 "I will also plant them on their land, And they will not again be rooted out from their land Which I have given them," (WHOSE LAND? ISRAEL'S LAND. IF GOD DOES NOT KEEP THIS PROMISE, THEN HE IS NOT TRUE TO HIS WORD. OF COURSE HE WILL KEEP THIS PROMISE TO THE NATION OF ISRAEL! CF Joel 2:26-27+, Zechariah 14:9-11+, Zephaniah 3:11+) Says the LORD your God.

**Moody Bible Commentary** - The blessings of the millennial Davidic kingdom include the restoration of the land. The land will be so fertile that farmers planting seed for the next harvest will push reapers of the same fields to finish their work so they can plant the next crop....Israel will return to the land and rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will enjoy security, abundant food, and blessings possible only in peacetime (cf. Lev 26:6+; Dt 28:6). Israel will put roots down in the promised land, never to leave it again (Mic 4:4-7+; Zech 14:11+). Nothing in Israel's historical restoration after exile fulfilled the promises given here. These promises are yet to be fulfilled in the millennium when Jesus Christ, David's descendant, rules from Jerusalem. Thus Amos concluded his book of judgment with an emphasis on future hope for Israel. Even though the overall message of Amos's book was judgment for disobedience, there was ultimate hope that one day the house of David would be restored, leading to the full restoration of the people of Israel. The central implication is that Israel's entire hope rests on the coming of the future Son of David, the Messiah of Israel, identified in the NT as Jesus of Nazareth.

**The kingdom** (see preceding note on "[Kingdom of God](#)") - In this context the apostles are referring to the Kingdom of God on earth, a literal kingdom where Christ will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords and Israel's prominence among the nations will be restored.

Peter alludes to this **restoration of the Kingdom of God** in his sermon in Acts...

"Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; 20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, 21 whom heaven must receive until the **period of restoration** of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets (THEY REPEATEDLY HAD SPOKEN OF THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL) from ancient time.(Acts 3:19-21+)

**NET Note** - What that **restoration** involves is already recorded in the scriptures of the nation of Israel.

**Thayer** says **restoration** means "the restoration not only of the true theocracy (**Ed**: Messiah reigning as King of kings) but also of that more perfect state of (even physical) things which existed before the fall."

**David Guzik** comments that here "Peter referred to the time when Jesus will return and rule the earth in righteousness. Peter went so far as to say, "that He may send Jesus Christ," thus implying that if the Jewish people as a whole repented, God the Father would send Jesus to return in glory. Peter made it clear that Jesus will remain in heaven until the times of restoration of all things, and since the repentance of Israel is one of the all things, there is some sense in which the return of Jesus in glory will not happen until Israel repents.ii. Peter essentially offered Israel the opportunity to hasten the return of Jesus by embracing Him on a national level, something that must happen before Jesus will return (as in Matthew 23:37-39 and Romans 11:25-27+). ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**MacArthur** - Some may have wondered why, if Jesus were the Messiah, He did not remain and set up His kingdom. In reply, Peter reiterates the truth that **in God's sovereign timetable the millennial kingdom follows the nation's repentance**. Until that time, Jesus will remain in heaven. The **period of restoration of all things** is another name for the future earthly reign of Christ, the millennial kingdom. It is reminiscent of our Lord's description of the kingdom as the "regeneration" (Matt. 19:28). It is then that the apostles' question in Acts 1:6 will be answered (cf. Mark 9:12). The kingdom will be marked by peace, joy, holiness, the revelation of God's glory, comfort, justice, knowledge of the Lord, health, prosperity, and freedom from



oppression. The universe will be dramatically altered in its physical form (Joel 2:30, 31; 3:14-16; Rev. 16:1-21) as the curse on man and his world is reversed. The truths Peter proclaimed were not new; God had spoken of them by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. The Old Testament prophets spoke repeatedly of Messiah's earthly kingdom. Joel 2:25 even refers to it as a time of restoration. That God spoke through the prophets proves their teachings were not human speculation but divine revelation (cf. 2 Peter 1:21). No clearer biblical statement of the inspiration of Old Testament Scripture can be found. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts 1-12)

**Anderson** - It was not that the nation would never see their Messiah again. God would send the Redeemer to Zion, but meanwhile the heavens must receive Him; the Forerunner has entered in (Heb 6:20), now seated "on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb 8:1). To state clearly the time when they would see the Lord Jesus again, Peter points forward to **"the times of restitution of all things"**. It is not normal to express the truth of the coming of the Messiah in this way. Previously Peter, like the writer to the Hebrews, had stated that He would be there in the heavens until His enemies would be made His footstool, but there he treats the subject more positively. The phrase **"until the times of restitution of all things"** is a description of the future reign of Christ. It implies the principle of restitution or restoration to which Moses' law paid such attention in Ex 22. **It is then that the kingdom will be restored to Israel in fulfillment of the answer to the apostles' question in Acts 1:6.** It is then that the related question of Elias coming and restoring all things will be fulfilled (Mark 9:12). When God's King reigns, everything that is out of place in the world will be restored to its proper place. Israel and all the nations will be back where they belong. Every principle of good and evil will be where it belongs, namely, truth on the throne and wrong on the scaffold. Peter adds that God had been speaking about this golden age by all the holy prophets since the world began, although he realised that there had also been false prophets among the people (2 Pet 2:1; Jer 5:31). (What the Bible teaches - Acts and James)

**Moody Bible Commentary** - Cognate verbs of the noun **restoration (apokatastasis** = restitution of a thing to its former condition) are used in the LXX for the eschatological restoration of Israel as a national entity (Jer 15:19; 16:15; Ezek 16:55; Hos 11:11) (Longenecker, "Acts", 297). Though Christ had taught his followers more about the kingdom of God in the 40 days between His resurrection and ascension, Peter and the apostles still anticipated a literal, geo-political messianic kingdom that would be inaugurated with the visible return of Christ to earth. Peter's expectation favored a literal kingdom for regenerated Israel with Messiah Jesus ruling on the throne of David over them and the world. According to Peter, this offer was for Israel and will be fulfilled whenever the nation turns in faith to Jesus as their Messiah and Lord (cf. comments at Zech 12:10; Mt 23:37-39; Ro 11:25-27).

**John MacArthur** - Jesus will not return to reign until Israel's rejection ends. After indicting the people of Israel for rejecting their Messiah (Acts 3:12-15), Peter exhorted them in Acts 3:19-21. It is only after they repent and return to God and have their sins forgiven that the kingdom (the **"times of refreshing"** and the **"period of restoration of all things"** [Acts 3:19-21]) will come, just as "God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time" in the Old Testament prophecies of the **kingdom**. God had promised Abraham that He would bless Israel and through them the world (Gen. 12:1-3).

#### Related Resources:

- [Restoration of the Fortunes of Judah and Israel](#)
- [The Glorious Restoration Of Israel](#) - John Walvoord
- [What is replacement theology / supersessionism?](#)
- [Will all Israel be saved in the end times?](#)
- [What is the Palestinian Covenant?](#)
- [Did God give Israel the Promised Land for all time \(Deuteronomy 4:40\)?](#)

**Acts 1:7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;**

KJV Acts 1:7 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.

- **It is not for you to know times or epochs** Acts 17:26; Deuteronomy 29:29; Daniel 2:21; Mt 24:36; Mark 13:32; Luke 21:24; Ephesians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:1,2; 1 Timothy 6:15; 2 Timothy 3:1

- **which the Father has fixed by His own authority** Mt 20:23; Mark 10:40
- [Acts Video - 3 hours - Luke's Introduction](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:6-11 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--2](#) - John MacArthur

Notice that Jesus does not rebuke His apostles for their questioning Him about the Kingdom of God, but only gently chides them regarding their desire to know its timing. Their question was valid, for again and again the Old Testament prophets had promised that one day in the future the nation of Israel would be restored and the Messiah would reign on the throne of David. Jesus did **NOT SAY** "You boys are incorrect in your eschatology. You've been reading too many literal interpretations in the commentaries. There is no coming earthly kingdom for Israel. Your problem is that you don't understand progressive revelation! All of these promises will be passed on to the Church who has replaced Israel in God's plan." No, Jesus did not say that and neither did He rebuke nor refute their question. Keep in mind that they had been speaking of **the things concerning the Kingdom of God** (Acts 1:3) and this fact along with the fact that Luke 24:43+ says Jesus had "**opened their minds to understand the Scriptures** (WHICH IS A REFERENCE TO THE OT SCRIPTURES)", surely some of those Old Testament Scriptures they discussed were related to the restoration of the Kingdom of God and the nation of Israel. The apostles simply wanted to know the timing of this wonderful event. And it is vital to see that Jesus does not say the prophecies of the Kingdom of God will not be literally fulfilled, but simply says that the timing of the coming Kingdom is not for them to know.

A short excursus on use of the truth of **progressive revelation** in a vain attempt to [abrogate](#) the Old Testament promises to Israel. Don Stewart explains that

"**Progressive revelation** does not mean to say that the Old Testament is somehow less true than the New Testament. The progress was not from untruth to truth - it was from less information to more full information. It merely states that the revelation found in the New Testament is complete. Jude wrote. "I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which has once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3)."The faith has now been once and for all delivered. Nothing needs to be added to it and nothing should be subtracted from it. **The New Revelation Did Not Contradict** (deny the truth of) **The Old** (READ THAT AGAIN!). It is important to understand that **progressive revelation does not contradict previous revelations but rather clarifies and develops the things previously revealed**. Jesus said the Law would be entirely fulfilled, not broken. "For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished" (Matthew 5:18). Jesus did not contradict the Old Testament law - rather he fulfilled it....The Bible Would Seem Contradictory If Progressive Revelation Is Not Understood. **If one does not recognize the progressive nature of God's revelation to humankind then they will be forced to admit contradictions in Scripture**. There are a number of passages that are at odds with each other if not understood in their historical setting." (See the full discussion by [Don Stewart](#))

**Bob Utley** has comments that show how one can use the doctrine of **progressive revelation** to argue against a literal interpretation of Scriptures regarding the nation of Israel. Utley writes

"The OT prophets predict a restoration of a Jewish kingdom in Palestine centered in Jerusalem where all the nations of the earth gather to praise and serve a Davidic ruler (**ED COMMENT**: This is a fascinating statement by Utley an amillennialist! One has to give him credit for reading and interpreting the OT promises to Israel literally! He of course discards them ostensibly based on the progressive revelation of the NT!), but the NT Apostles never focus on this agenda (**Ed**: Whoa! Is that really a true statement? Even Acts 1:6 refutes this [spurious](#) (plausible but false) statement! Unless you don't believe that the apostles interpreted the OT promises to Israel literally! And by the way, they did not even have so called **progressive revelation**, but only the revelation in the "old" Old Testament!). Is not the OT inspired (cf. Matt. 5:17-19)? Have the NT authors omitted crucial end-time events?...The Spirit revealed truths to the OT writers in terms and categories they could understand. However, **through progressive revelation** the Spirit has expanded these OT eschatological concepts to a universal scope." ([Utley's remarks](#) - see Roman numeral I, letter "E" for his full statement)

So if I understand Utley correctly, what he has done is use the truth of **progressive revelation** to say that now that we are in the NT, the OT promises to Israel do not need to be taken literally. Utley in effect seems to be replacing the OT revelation with NT revelation using the [guise](#) of "*progressive revelation*" to substantiate his conclusions. In one sense, the "*hermeneutical gymnastics*" that Utley goes through in an attempt to [defang](#)

the OT promises to Israel of their literalness, actually serves to add weight to the fact that they are literally true. Perhaps Utley needs to reread Romans 9-11 where Paul deals with the "**Jewish Problem**" and toward the end says "**the gifts and the calling of God are [irrevocable](#) ([ameteleutos](#)).**" (Romans 11:29+) To all who would attempt to erase the Covenant Keeping God's [immutable](#) literal promises to the literal nation of Israel, perhaps they need to look up the definition of "irrevocable." To save time, **irrevocable** means "**incapable of being retracted or revoked!**" And as an aside the last book of the Bible has an unequivocal "Jewish flavor," [au contraire](#) Utley's statement "*Modern interpreters who try to make the OT model literal or normative twist the Revelation into a **very Jewish book***") supporting that God is not finished with the nation of Israel even in the end of His "progressive revelation!". As **Tony Garland** says ([reference](#)) "In the book of Revelation, nearly all occurrences of **twelve**, with the exception of the fruit of the tree of life (Rev. 22:2+), are related to the tribes of Israel and reflect the intense "**Jewishness**" of the book....The two teachings of the book which have probably been most opposed have been the Millennial reign of Christ on earth (Rev. 20:4+) and the prophetic certainty of a time of great upheaval and judgment coming upon the earth prior to the establishment of the reign of Christ. The former was a key reason for the rejection of the book **among some in the early church who viewed any fulfillment of Old Testament promises involving the Jews with great disdain**. The latter is more frequently under attack in our own day." (See [replacement theology / supersessionism](#)) As an aside, I think Bob Utley's comments on many texts are insightful and helpful. It is only when he expounds on the eschatological passages related to the literal nation of Israel that I have major disagreement.

**Moody Bible Commentary** adds that "Nothing in Jesus' answer suggests that the disciples' question was in error, other than their fixation on the time of the restoration. Israel would have a full restoration under the Messiah. But Jesus did not specify when this would happen, and instead presented the mission that must preoccupy His disciples before the kingdom is established. Some believe that the promises in the OT to Israel about restoration to the land have been fulfilled in Christ for the church. Therefore they interpret Jesus' words as a rebuke for the apostles for misunderstanding the nature, the extent, and the timing of the kingdom. In contrast others believe that Israel will be literally restored to the land during the future millennial (thousand-year) reign of Christ on earth. According to this interpretation, Jesus did not rebuke the apostles for anticipating a literal kingdom but rather for their desire to know times or epochs. This view is more plausible since Jesus did not actually deny that there would be a future kingdom for Israel. Rather He maintained that the disciples just could not know when it would come. Moreover, this view is supported by Peter's continuing expectation for a future "restoration of all things" at the second coming of Christ (cf. Acts 3:19-21+)."

**MacArthur** - That Jesus does not deny their expectation of a literal, earthly kingdom involving Israel is highly significant. It shows that their understanding of the promised kingdom was correct, except for the time of its coming. If they were mistaken about such a crucial point in His kingdom teaching, His failure to correct them is mystifying and deceptive. A far more likely explanation is that the apostles' expectation of a literal, earthly kingdom mirrored the Lord's own teaching and the plan of God clearly revealed in the Old Testament. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts 1-12).

**Ray Pritchard on It is not for you to know** - This is what you might call a divine put-down. Some have misunderstood Jesus as saying that there will never be a kingdom on the earth at all. But nothing could be further from the truth. Suppose that on the first day of the semester the teacher tells the class that there will be four major tests and a few unscheduled pop quizzes. One inquisitive scholar raises his hand and asks, "Teacher, are you going to give us a pop quiz next Thursday?" "It's not for you to know the times and dates of my pop quizzes," the teacher replies. "As the one in authority over this class, I alone know the dates." Does that mean there aren't going to be any pop quizzes? No, and if the students think that, they're going to be sadly surprised one day when the teacher says, "Take out a piece of paper." By the same token, when Jesus says, "It's not for you to know the times or dates," it can only mean that the kingdom is coming but no one can ever be sure of the date in advance. ([Is It the Time Yet?](#))

**Steven Cole** - The disciples ask Jesus if it is at this time that He is restoring the kingdom to Israel. He replies, in a nice way, "That's none of your business. Your job is to be My witnesses in every part of the world." In other words, our focus is not to be on prophetic timetables, but on the Great Commission. Commentators are quick to jump on the disciples for focusing on the earthly kingdom of Israel, whereas Jesus' focus was on His spiritual kingdom. But this is to miss the point. Jesus did not correct the notion that He would someday restore the kingdom to Israel. He corrected their concern about when it would happen. He redirected their focus to the great task of the present age, to bear witness of Jesus Christ to all peoples. Donald Grey Barnhouse calls the amillennial view (that God is through with the Jews as a people and that there will not be a future kingdom on earth) "one of the greatest heresies that men can promulgate". On the other side, I read this week from a web site called "Dispensational Dementia," that dispensationalism is a terrible heresy that denies the gospel. I think that both Barnhouse and the anti-dispensationalists are greatly overstating their criticisms! There are godly Bible scholars who hold to all of the major views (pre-, post-, and a-millennial) of Bible prophecy. As long as they affirm the bodily second coming of Jesus Christ in power and glory, there is room for difference of opinion, and we must be charitable to those who disagree with us. While it is both necessary and profitable to study the prophetic portions of Scripture and to try to fit them into a consistent eschatology, we need to take heed to our Lord's warning here. We should not get so

caught up with our views of prophecy that we neglect the clear mandate of the Great Commission. ([Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#))

**He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs-** Stated another way "You are not permitted to know the times or periods...." or "it is not your concern." Moses made a similar statement declaring to Israel that ""The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed (SO SOME THINGS WILL BE REVEALED, BUT NOT ALL THINGS) belong to us and to our sons forever, (NOTICE THE PURPOSE) that we may observe all the words of this law (KNOWLEDGE REVEALED TO US AS WE STUDY THE SCRIPTURES IS NOT TO MAKE US SMARTER SINNERS, BUT TO MAKE US MORE LIKE THE SAVIOR! REMEMBER KNOWLEDGE PUFFS UP! GOD DESIRES NOT BIG HEADS BUT TENDER HEARTS!)." (Dt 29:29)

Jesus is not saying we should never spend time studying Bible prophecy (eschatology) as I commonly hear some younger evangelicals suggest. What Jesus is saying, is where Scripture does not tell us specifically on a topic, specifically in this case, the timing of the coming Kingdom of God, we are not to bother ourselves with attempting to set dates. Some who study prophecy read the newspapers and interpret the prophecy through the news of the day. That is backwards, for our primary focus should always be on the Scriptures, and then we will be able to discern the signs of the times when they clearly, unequivocally square with the description in God's Word. Does that make sense? I love prophecy but it has gotten a "bad name" (so to speak) because some who study it make claims which are sensationalistic or speculative which "sours" prophetic study for others who are more sober-minded.

**Know** (1097)([ginosko](#)) means to acquire information through some modality, as through sense perception (hearing). Used in Mt 13:11 where Jesus told the disciples "To you it has been granted to **know** the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted." Yes, they would know some of the mysteries of the kingdom, but not the exact timing of the kingdom.

**Times** (5550)([chronos](#)) is an indefinite period of time during which some activity or event takes place. Chronos is used in Acts 17:30 Paul declaring "having overlooked the **times** of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent." Peter uses chronos later in this chapter as they prepare to select an apostle to replace Judas, declaring "it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the **time** that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us."

**Luke's uses of chronos -**

Lk. 1:57; Lk. 4:5; Lk. 8:27; Lk. 8:29; Lk. 18:4; Lk. 20:9; Lk. 23:8; Acts 1:6; Acts 1:7; Acts 1:21; Acts 3:21; Acts 7:17; Acts 7:23; Acts 8:11; Acts 13:18; Acts 14:3; Acts 14:28; Acts 15:33; Acts 17:30; Acts 18:20; Acts 18:23; Acts 19:22; Acts 20:18; Acts 27:9

**Steven Cole** - Jesus says that it is not for us to know the **times** or **epochs**. **Times** is the Greek word **chronos**, and refers to any length of time. It includes the other word, **kairos**, which means opportune moments or critical, epoch-making periods (R. C. Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament). Thus the Reformation or the great missionary movement of the past 200 years would be "**epochs**." All such movements are already fixed by the Father by His own authority. This should give us great comfort, not only that history is under God's sovereign control and plan, but that it is the Father who is our Sovereign! Thus whether we live in an age of intense persecution for our faith or in an age of revival, we can know that the loving Father is in sovereign control.

**Epochs** (seasons)(2540) ([kairos](#)) means a season, a period of time, frequently with the implication of being especially fit for something and without emphasis on precise chronology. An **epoch** defines a period marked by distinctive character, a point in time beginning a new or distinctive period or a long period of time marked by some predominant or typical characteristic. Kairos can mean a moment or period as especially appropriate the right, proper, favorable time (at the right time). An opportunity. Something that lasts for a season and thus endures only for a specific period of time. In his sermon Peter used kairos declaring "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that **times** (kairos) of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3:19-+)

**Luke's uses of kairos -**

Lk. 1:20; Lk. 4:13; Lk. 8:13; Lk. 12:42; Lk. 12:56; Lk. 13:1; Lk. 18:30; Lk. 19:44; Lk. 20:10; Lk. 21:8; Lk. 21:24; Lk. 21:36; Acts 1:7; Acts 3:19; Acts 7:20; Acts 12:1; Acts 13:11; Acts 14:17; Acts 17:26; Acts 19:23; Acts 24:25

**William Mounce** writes that "unlike **chronos**, which is more focused on chronological time, **kairos** is time as significant events. This term frequently designates events in salvation history, such as the "time" of the birth of Moses, who led the Exodus from Egypt (Acts 7:20), as well as "the appointed time" for Christ to lead the second "exodus" (Mt 26:18; cf. Mk 1:15; Lk 19:44; Jn 7:6, 8; Ro 5:6; Eph 1:10). Thus, Peter states that the coming of Jesus marked "the time" of which the prophets inquired and predicted (1Pe 1:10, 11, 12). Furthermore, kairos is used to designate the second coming of Christ (1Ti 6:15), including the end judgment ("the time is near," Rev 1:3; 11:18; 22:10; cf. Mt 8:29; Mk 13:33; 1Cor 4:5). ([Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words](#))

**Pritchard** says there are two distinct words **times** and **epochs** and "the first refers to duration of times and the second refers to both length of times and kinds of times—such as "hard times." Jesus is telling us that we can't know the time in general or specific relating

to His return. Those things the Father has reserved for Himself." ([Is It the Time Yet?](#))

**Lenski** on **chronos** and **kairos** in this passage - In his answer Jesus distinguishes "times" (longer stretches) from "seasons" (shorter ones, each marked in a certain way)

**A T Robertson** comments that "It is curious how eager people have always been to fix definite dates about the second coming of Christ as the apostles were about the political Messianic kingdom which they were expecting."

**Spurgeon** on **It is not for you to know times or epochs** - Jesus's disciples put a question to him about restoring the kingdom to Israel. His reply shows us some things are not for us to know. **First**, it is not proper for us. It is not our work. We are not sent into the world to be prophets but to be witnesses. A veil hangs between us and the future. We are told to look for the coming of our Lord and to stand in perpetual expectation of His return (Titus 2:13-+), but to know the time he will come is not our responsibility. **Second**, it is not profitable for us. Would we be better off if we could make a map of all that is yet to be? In what respect would it alter our conduct for tomorrow? In what way would it help us perform the duties our Master has enjoined on us? I believe it would be a dangerous gift; we would be tempted to set ourselves up as interpreters of the future. Nor do I know that by foretelling the future we would convince our hearers. **Third**, it is not possible for us. We may study as we will and pray as we please, but the times and the periods are not committed to us. Our Lord spoke of one great event of which even he did not know the time—"Now concerning that day and hour no one knows—neither the angels of heaven nor the Son—except the Father alone" (Mt 24:36). **Fourth**, it is not good for us, for it would distract our attention from the great things on which we are to think. It is enough for our minds to dwell on the Cross and the coming glory of our Lord. If we keep these two things distinctly before us, we will not puzzle our brains about the future. But there is something better than knowing the times or the periods; it is good for us to know they are under the Father's authority. The events will come to pass in due time. The future is all in God's hands.

**Which the Father has fixed by His own authority** - Since the Kingdom will be restored when Christ returns, the apostles in a sense are asking when is the Second Coming (cf Mt 24:3)? Jesus Himself said "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but **the Father alone.**" (Mt 24:36).

The **NLT** is an excellent paraphrase - "He replied, "The Father Alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know."

**Pritchard** on **which the Father has fixed by His own authority** - In the Greek it's even stronger than that (NET = "You are not permitted to know"). The words mean that God the Father has set by His own divine authority the timetable for all the events surrounding the Second Coming of Christ to the earth. No one else can know that timetable. It's His and His alone. ([Is It the Time Yet?](#))

**Has fixed** (or has set) emphasizes that God the Father is sovereign and in total control of His redemptive plan for the world, and while He reveals to us much information regarding the end times, matters of specific timing He keeps to Himself!

**His own authority** ([1849](#))(**exousia**) speaks of the right and the might to do as He pleases. And notice this authority is "His own," originating from Himself and not delegated to Him by anyone. Again, we see the Father is in complete control of everything! Why are we so prone to anxiety when the "tests" come into our life, like the Stock Market taking the largest and second largest declines in its history in the month of February, 2018? Is the Stock Market out of His sovereign control?

---

**Ray Pritchard** applies the apostles' question about time to our lives (The following is just a summary of his major points. Click [Is It the Time Yet?](#) for full exposition of each point - very helpful!)

1. There is a lesson here about humility. There are some things in life we don't know because we haven't learned them yet....
2. This teaches us that God's timetable and ours are not the same. Most of us are in a hurry. God isn't....
3. Our text reminds us of the true secret of contentment. Contentment comes when you realize that you have everything you need right now....
4. We learn something about doing God's will. ([Is It the Time Yet?](#))

**Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."**

KJV Acts 1:8 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.



- **but you will receive** Acts 2:1-4; 6:8; 8:19; Mic 3:8; Zech 4:6; Lk 10:19; Rev 11:3-6
- **power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you** Luke 1:35; 24:29; Ro 15:19
- **and you shall be My witnesses** Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32; 10:39-41; 13:31; 22:15; Mt 28:19; Mk 16:15; Lk 24:46-49; Jn 15:27
- **Samaria** Acts 8:5-25
- **even to the remotest part of the earth** Ps 22:27; 98:3; Isa 42:10; 49:6; 52:10; 66:19; Jer 16:19; Mt 24:14; Ro 10:18; 15:19
- [Acts Video - 3 hours - Luke's Introduction](#)
- **Related Resource:** [A Spirit Filled Church](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:6-11 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--2](#) - John MacArthur

## THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE CHURCH'S GREATEST NEED!

### Index to Notes on Acts 1:8

- Acts 1:8 Commentary - Similar notes with more in depth word studies
- [The Striking Contrasts](#) - Acts 1:7 and Acts 1:8
- [Divine Dunamis](#) - Dunamis A Key Word in the Book of Acts
- [Jesus, Dunamis and Disciples](#)
- [The Secret of Effective Ministry](#)
- [God's Perfect Timing](#)
- [Can I Get a Witness?](#)
- [An Ever Expanding Worldwide Witness](#)
- [The Church's Greatest Need: The Power of the Holy Spirit](#)
- [Following Jesus' Example](#) - How Did Jesus Function in His Ministry?
- [Illustrations Related to Acts 1:8](#)

**But (alla)** is a term of contrast, in this case contrasting the "negative" response of Acts 1:7 with the "positive" promise of Acts 1:8. The contrast is between knowing the timing of the kingdom in the future and receiving the power necessary for ministry in the present.

**Adrian Rogers** - They wanted to talk about **prophecy**—He wanted to talk about **proclamation**.

**A W Tozer** - If God were to take the Holy Spirit out of this world, much of what we're doing in our churches would go right on and nobody would know the difference!...I do not believe in a **repetition** of Pentecost, but I do believe in a **perpetuation** of Pentecost—and there is a vast difference between the two.

**Vance Havner** - Satan has scored a point in making us so afraid of extremism about the Holy Spirit—which abounds indeed—that we may miss the true in our fear of the false. We can be so wary of getting out on a **limb** that we never go up the **tree**!

**John Murray**- If Pentecost is not repeated, neither is it retracted. This is the era of the Holy Spirit.

**A. C. Dixon** - "When we rely upon organization, we get what organization can do. When we rely upon education, we get what education can do. When we rely upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do. But when we rely upon the Holy Spirit, we get what God can do."

**John Stott** - Before Christ sent the church into the world, he sent the Spirit into the church. The same order must be observed today. ([The Message of Acts](#))

**J Vernon McGee** on Acts 1:8 - This is the commission that still holds for today. This is not given only to a corporate body, to the church as a body; it is not a corporate commission. This is a very personal command to each believer—personally, privately....It is our business to get the Word of God out to the world. We can't say that it is up to the church to send missionaries and to give out the gospel, and then sit back and let others do it. The all-important question is whether you are getting out the Word of God. Have you gone to the ends of the earth as a witness to the gospel? Or do you support a missionary or a radio program that does? Are you personally involved?...I am of the opinion that if the Lord should suddenly appear to you or to me right where we are at this moment, He would not talk about the time of His coming, but He would talk about getting out the gospel. He wants people to be saved. This is

our commission.

**Ray Pritchard** writes that 'Just before he returned to heaven, Jesus explained to his disciples what they were to do after his departure. What he said to them, he also says to us. He left us on the earth that we might be his witnesses. In heaven there will be no witnesses because in heaven seeing is believing. There the Lamb will be the light and he will need no lesser lights, but in this dark world we are the only light he has. On earth we are his witnesses. He does not send angels to proclaim his name and he does not write the gospel in lightning across the skies. He uses people like us to convince other people like us to believe in him. We are God's witnesses—his evidence if you will—to convince an unbelieving world. If we do not do our part, God has no other plan....Our greatest need today is not for political power but for the power of the Holy Spirit. Political power can change leaders but it can't change hearts. It can win an election but it can't save a life. It can pass righteous laws—or repeal unrighteous ones—but it can't make men righteous. Politics cannot change the way people think because it touches the outside of life. Only the Holy Spirit can change hearts, restore families and save an entire nation from destruction. In 1919, Congress ratified the 18th Amendment to the Constitution that prohibited the sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages in the United States. The people who supported the Amendment—including the great evangelist Billy Sunday—meant well. They truly believed that by outlawing liquor, they could improve society. Many people called it "the Grand Experiment." It didn't work, largely because Americans by the millions chose to flout the law by patronizing bootleggers and speakeasies. In 1933, the 21st Amendment repealed the 18th Amendment and the Grand Experiment was over. It failed because no law can change human nature—a point Paul makes forcefully in Romans 7:15-25. If people want to drink, all the laws in the world aren't going to stop them. That's why we need the Holy Spirit. He can take the gospel we preach and use it to bring men and women to repentance of sin and faith in Jesus Christ. He can replace their old hearts with new ones and give them a hunger to live for righteousness. " ([You Will Be My Witnesses](#))

**But** (235)(*alla*) is a conjunction which signifies a [contrast](#) (see Table below) which always introduces a "change of direction" so to speak. Whenever you observe a "but", pause and prayerfully ponder the text and [context](#) (to study the verse not in isolation but in relation to other verses) by asking the "[5W/H](#)" questions, remembering that an interrogative mindset is a vital component of [inductive Bible study](#) and also an integral component of the [blessed](#) discipline of [Biblical Meditation](#) (see Ps 1:1-[+](#), Ps 1:2-[+](#), Ps 1:3-[+](#), Joshua 1:8-[+](#)). As **Mortimer Adler** once wrote in his excellent book [How to Read a Book](#) ([online](#)) "If you ask a living teacher a question, he may really answer you. If you are puzzled by what he says, you may save yourself the trouble of thinking by asking him what he means. If, however, you ask a book a question, you must answer it yourself. In this respect a book is like *nature*. When you speak to it, it answers you only to the extent that you do the work of thinking and analysis yourself." The Bible of course is not like *nature*, nor is it like any other book, for as believers we possess within ourselves (1Cor 3:16, 1Cor 6:19-[+](#)) the Holy Spirit, the Author and "Decipherer" of the Book. And so as we prayerfully, humbly, thoughtfully, meditatively, yea even as a little child (Mt 18:3-4) interrogate the "[living and active](#)" (Heb 4:12-[+](#)) **Word of Truth** (Ps 119:43-[+](#), 2Co 6:7, Col 1:5-[+](#), 2Ti 2:15-[+](#), Jas 1:18-[+](#), see also Jn 8:31,32, 17:17), our Teacher, the Spirit, in some very real (albeit to me still mysterious) way interacts with us, illuminating the inspired Word and leading us into all Truth, even as Jesus promised (John 16:13, cp Jn 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7 1 Jn 2:20-[+](#), 1 Jn 2:27-[+](#)).

THE STRIKING CONTRASTS	
ACTS 1:7	ACTS 1:8
FUTURE	PRESENT
WHAT THEY <u>WILL NOT</u>	WHAT THEY <u>WILL</u>
RECEIVE NOW	RECEIVE NOW
THE PROMISED	THE PROMISED
MESSIANIC KINGDOM	HOLY SPIRIT
RESTORATION OF	SALVATION OF
A NATION	SOULS
REBIRTH OF	BIRTH OF
ISRAEL	THE CHURCH
PROPHECY OF	PROPHECY OF
A KINGDOM	A POWER
TIMING NOT TO BE	TIMING KNOWN
KNOWN BY THEM	BY THEM
TIMING FIXED BY	NOT MANY
THE FATHER	DAYS FROM NOW

**You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you** - Not "if" He comes but when He comes. The Father had promised and the Son would deliver.

*You can save a lot of time — by waiting on God!*

-- Adrian Rogers

**Will receive** (2983) (**lambano**) in classical Greek has two main uses. One is more **active**, "to take"; the other is more **passive**, "to receive." Here **lambano** is used in the more passive sense as to have something given to you (get), receive hospitality (welcome), receive in-laws from a marriage, receive a name, receive punishment, receive profits, or receive permission for something. In this case the idea of **receive** clearly implies that something is given, which of course in this context is the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38, Acts 10:45) Who Jesus received from the Father and gave to the apostles and to all believers. <https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/chart-42-01/>

**Lambano** is used in the context of the gift of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:33 "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and **having received** from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

Acts 2:38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and **you will receive** the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Luke's** uses of **lambano** -

Lk. 5:5; Lk. 5:26; Lk. 6:4; Lk. 6:34; Lk. 7:16; Lk. 9:16; Lk. 9:39; Lk. 11:10; Lk. 13:19; Lk. 13:21; Lk. 18:30; Lk. 19:12; Lk. 19:15; Lk. 20:21; Lk. 20:28; Lk. 20:29; Lk. 20:31; Lk. 20:47; Lk. 22:17; Lk. 22:19; Lk. 24:30; Lk. 24:43

Acts 1:8; Acts 1:20; Acts 1:25; Acts 2:33; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:3; Acts 3:5; Acts 7:53; Acts 8:15; Acts 8:17; Acts 8:19; Acts 9:19; Acts 9:25; Acts 10:43; Acts 10:47; Acts 15:14; Acts 16:3; Acts 16:24; Acts 17:9; Acts 17:15; Acts 19:2; Acts 20:24; Acts 20:35; Acts 26:10; Acts 26:18; Acts 27:35; Acts 28:15

**A T Pierson** comments that "(1) The Spirit of God, the Paraclete, is to be to the disciple and to the church all that Christ would have been had he tarried among us and been the personal companion and counselor of each and all. (2) And by the Spirit of God working in and through the believer and the church, believers are, in their measure, to be to the world what the Spirit is to them.... Let this first lesson be written in large letters to be read by all, for it unlocks all the history that follows, and explains every subsequent lesson: the one supreme qualification of Christ's witnesses is this: that THEY BE ENDUED AND ENDOWED WITH POWER BY THE HOLY SPIRIT." (The Acts of the Holy Spirit)

**Richard Longenecker** summarizes Acts 1:8 observing that it is "the mandate to witness that stands as the theme for the whole of Acts is explicitly set out. It comes as a direct commission from Jesus Himself—in fact, as Jesus' last word before His ascension and, therefore, as one that is final and conclusive. All that follows in Acts is shown to be the result of Jesus' own intent and the fulfillment of His express word. This commission lays an obligation on all Christians and comes to us as a gift with a promise. It concerns a **person**, a **power**, and a **program**—the **Person** of Jesus, on Whose authority the church acts and Who is the object of its witness; the **power** of the Holy Spirit, which is the sine qua non for the mission; and a **program** that begins at Jerusalem, moves out to "all Judea and Samaria," and extends "to the ends of the earth." The Christian church, according to Acts, is a missionary church that responds obediently to Jesus' commission, acts on Jesus' behalf in the extension of his ministry, focuses its proclamation of the kingdom of God in its witness to Jesus, is guided and empowered by the self-same Spirit that directed and supported Jesus' ministry, and follows a program whose guidelines for outreach have been set by Jesus himself. ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**Paul Apple** discusses what it is that the Holy Spirit provides for believers - Guidance / giving opportunities to witness; divine appointments. Boldness in witnessing. Helping us in what to say and how to answer questions. Most importantly: Effectiveness in ministry vs frustration – power to change lives

**Ray Stedman:** Here in this introduction we have all the elements that make up the book of Acts: a risen Lord whose life is made available through the coming of the Spirit, and who will come again in power and great glory, but with whom we are yet in instant communication by means of the miracle of prayer. That is the book of Acts. That is the life of the church. These are what make any group of Christians have an impact, and exercise a vital revolutionary force in the age in which they live. May God grant that this will be our experience.

**A. J. Gordon** used to tell a story about an American taking a friend from England to see [Niagara Falls](#). He said to his friend, "Come, and I'll show you the greatest unused power in the world." And taking him to the foot of Niagara Falls, "there," he said, "is the greatest unused power in the world!" "Ah, no my brother, not so!" was the reply. "**The greatest unused power in the world is the Holy Spirit of the living God.**" Jesus' words affirm this analogy between power of Niagara Falls and the power of the Holy Spirit for He declared...

Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, Whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:37-39+)

Why should the children of a King  
Go mourning all their days?  
Great Comforter, descend, and bring  
Some tokens of Thy grace.

--Isaac Watts

---

## DIVINE DUNAMIS: A KEY WORD IN ACTS

**James Montgomery Boice** wrote that "The Greek word **dunamis** entered the English language when the Swedish chemist and engineer Alfred Bernhard Nobel (1833-96) made the discovery that became his fortune. He discovered a power stronger than anything the world had known up to that time. He asked a friend of his who was a Greek scholar what the word for "explosive power" was in Greek. His friend answered, "Dunamis." Nobel said, "Well, I am going to call my discovery by that name." So he called his explosive power "**dynamite**."...Jesus taught that when we receive the power of the Holy Spirit, the result will not be miracles, signs, or healings, but witnessing!"

There are two NT words that convey the idea of **power**, **exousia** and **dunamis**, and it is the latter which is used by Luke in Acts 1:8. However, these two words are related in one sense, for the One Who promises the **power** (**dunamis**) is the very One to Whom all **authority** (**exousia** = "the right and the might") "**in heaven and on earth**" has been granted (Mt 28:18)! It follows that His promise of **power** can be fully trusted because He has full **authority** to make such an incredible proclamation - **natural** men and women will receive **supernatural** power to be His **witnesses** and by their **witness** will be privileged to **witness** the great miracle (based upon the greatest miracle, the Resurrection of Christ) of rebirth of a dead spirit, the creation of new life, eternal life in another human soul. Let me encourage you to study the Biblical truths about power in the following section, and as you study this truth, may **our Father be pleased to generate in your inner being a deep, abiding hunger and thirst to experience the continual fullness of the Holy Spirit and the power He provides to live the supernatural life as a dynamic witness for Jesus Christ and His Gospel of grace. Amen.**

**Adrian Rogers** - Christianity is a love relationship between a child of God and his Maker, through the Son Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Power** (Miracles) (1411)(**dunamis** from **dunamai** = to be able, to have power especially achieving power) refers to **inherentability**, not physical ability but power to accomplish a task. **Dunamis** is intrinsic power, the power to carry out some function. In Acts 1:8, **dunamis** is associated with the coming of the **Holy Spirit** upon a person, giving that person the supernatural power capable of accomplishing the task Jesus assigns. So clearly, in the **context** of the book of Acts, "**Divine dunamis**" is the power which is **necessary** (emphasize "*necessary*") for **disciples** to be witnesses of the Good News, which also possesses inherent "**Divine dunamis**" as Paul explained declaring...

For (term of explanation = see context = Ro 1:15+) I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for (term of explanation = e.g., Ask "Why not?") it (What?) is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes (present tense), to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Ro 1:16+).

**Leon Morris** reminds us of something we often forget that "The same power that brought Christ back from the dead is operative within those who are Christ's." Which should cause us to break out in song...

[Jesus Be Jesus In Me](#)

Jesus be Jesus in me, no longer me but Thee.  
Resurrection power fill me this hour.  
Jesus be Jesus in me.

**Gilbert** writes that **dunamis** "is used of both an **inward spiritual equipment** and of the **resulting outward achievement**. Thus Stephen was full of power (Acts 6:8), and great powers or miracles were wrought by Philip (Acts 8:13)The connection of this power with the Spirit of God was to be illustrated in the case of the disciples as it had been in the earthly life of Jesus (Acts 10:38). ([Acts 1 - Interpretative Comment from Bible for Home and School -1908](#))

**Dunamis** (power) is clearly a **key word** in the book of Acts where it is used 10 times, 3x to describe **miracles** (supernatural power

that is visible) and 7x as **power** (supernatural power that is necessary for ministry - albeit Acts 8:10 refers to counterfeit supernatural power of Simon the sorcerer!)...

Acts 1:8 but you will receive **power (dunamis)** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with **miracles (dunamis)** and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know--

Acts 3:12 But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own **power (dunamis)** or piety we had made him walk (**Context** = Acts 3:1-6, 7, 8)?

**Comment:** Peter's implication is that it is not his "**power**" (**dunamis**) but it is God's power, supernatural power by which the miracles have been performed.

Acts 4:7 When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, "By what **power (dunamis)**, or in what name, have you done this (Context = healed the lame man - see preceding use of **power**)?"

**Comment:** Luke records that "seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply." (Acts 4:14) As **Henry Morris** commented "Intellectual or philosophical arguments are silenced when confronted with direct evidence of the (supernatural) **power (dunamis)** of the Gospel." ([Defender's Study Bible](#))

Acts 4:31 (For Context) And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit**, and began to speak the word of God with boldness (**What was the effect of filling?** Speaking the Word of God, not their words, and doing so with boldness, clear evidence of the power Jesus had promised would be associated with the coming of the Holy Spirit)... **Acts 4:33** And with great **power (dunamis)** the **apostles** were giving **testimony** (*marturion* from *martus*) to the **resurrection** of the Lord Jesus, and abundant **grace** was upon them all.

**Comment:** Observe how the **apostles** obeyed Acts 1:8 and God blessed their obedience. Will He do any less for any of His disciples who obey His charge to be "**My witness**" wherever He has placed us? I think not!

Acts 6:8 And Stephen, full of grace and **power (dunamis)**, was performing great wonders and signs among the people.

**Comment:** Be careful when you read a passage in isolation, lest you arrive an incorrect interpretation. If possible take time to examine the context -- you will often be pleasantly rewarded with wonderful insights! In the present passage, we learn from the context that Stephen was "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5) and here in verse 8 we see he is full of grace and power. Do you think there is any association? The answer is obviously "yes" and so once again we observe the intimate association of the presence (and fullness) of the **Holy Spirit** and **power**. Notice that spiritual opposition arose but "they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he (Stephen) was speaking." (Acts 6:10) Why? Because Stephen's power was not human but divine! The same power every believer has access when filled with the Holy Spirit (cp Eph 5:18). Observe the Spirit empowered boldness that prompted Stephen to tell the Jewish audience "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did. Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; " (Acts 7:51, 52). And how did they respond? "They were cut to the quick and they began gnashing their teeth at him" (Acts 7:54) And how did Stephen respond? "But **being full of the Holy Spirit**, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God 56 and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55-56) And observe his supernatural power to forgive the very ones who were stoning him declaring "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And having said this, he fell asleep." (Acts 7:60) Stephen had received power and the fullness of the Spirit to be a witness for Jesus, for a man named Saul watched Stephen's supernatural life and death and later became Paul, the greatest apostle of the New Testament. That's what Acts 1:8 is about!

As a side exercise study the passages in Acts that describe filling or fullness of the Spirit (remember to observe the context) - Acts 2:4, Acts 4:8, Acts 4:31, 33, Acts 6:3, 5, 8, 7:55, Acts 9:17, Acts 11:24 (note



the impact of his witness), Acts 13:9 (contrast Acts 13:9), Acts 13:52 (compare Ro 15:13).

Acts 8:10 and they all, from smallest to greatest, were giving attention to him, saying, "This man is what is called the Great **Power (dunamis)** of God."

Acts 8:13 Even Simon himself believed; and after being baptized, he continued on with Philip, and as he observed signs and great **miracles** taking place, he was constantly amazed.

Acts 10:38 "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the **Holy Spirit** and with **power (dunamis)**, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

**Comment:** Beloved, do not miss the intimate association of the presence of the **Spirit** and **power** in the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. As will be discussed more fully below, Jesus is our great example for dynamic, supernatural ministry. If He needed the Spirit and the power, how much greater is our need? Why do we so often attempt to minister in our natural ability rather than relying upon God's provision of power?

Acts 19:11 God was performing extraordinary **miracles (dunamis)** by the hands of Paul

**Paul** also associates the **Holy Spirit** with supernatural **power (dunamis)** in the following passages...

Romans 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by **the power of the Holy Spirit**

Romans 15:18 For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, 19 in the **power (dunamis)** of signs and wonders, in the **power (dunamis) of the Spirit**; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as [Illyricum](#) I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

**Comment:** Notice the phrase "**what Christ has accomplished through me.**" How did Christ accomplish this spread of the Gospel? Acts 1:8 says that being Christ's witness requires the power which is associated with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7), the Spirit of Christ (Ro 8:9-+). Note also that [Illyricum](#) was a province of the Roman Empire, lying East and Northeast of the Adriatic Sea. Paul is describing the witness of Jesus being spread **to the remotest part of the earth**

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the **power of God**.

1 Corinthians 2:4 and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of **the Spirit and of power (dunamis)**, 5 so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the **power (dunamis) of God**.

1 Thessalonians 1:5 for our Gospel did not come to you in word only, but also **in power (dunamis)** and **in the Holy Spirit** and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

Ephesians 3:16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with **power (dunamis)** through His **Spirit** in the inner man,

Ephesians 3:20 Now to Him Who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the **power (dunamis)** that works within us,

**Comment:** While this passage does not mention the Holy Spirit, the phrase "the power that works within us" is clearly a manifestation of the Spirit Who dwells within us and through Whom God works.

Colossians 1:29 For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His **power (dunamis)**, which mightily works within me.

**Comment:** As in Ephesians 3:20, the **power** that works within us is a manifestation of the Spirit of Christ Who lives within us, strengthening us in our inner man, enabling us to do supernaturally what we could never do naturally.

The power that compels us  
comes from the Spirit who indwells us.

**Dunamis** (dynamis) is the source of our English words **dynamic**, **dynamo**, and **dynamite**. Ponder the meanings of these English

words as you **meditate** on Acts 1:8 and how this truth should impact our **witness** to a world spiritually dead in "**trespasses** and **sins**" (Eph 2:1-+).

**Dynamic** is an adjective describing one as "characterized by constant activity," "marked by usually continuous and productive activity or change," "energetic". Synonyms = "alive, functioning, live, operative, running, working." "Many a person who thinks he's a human dynamo is probably more like an electric fan." As a noun **dynamic** describes "a force that stimulates change." **Would you describe our witness as dynamic?**

**Dynamo** is "a machine for converting mechanical energy into electrical energy by rotating conducting coils in a magnetic field," "an extremely energetic person,"

**Dynamite** is a well known explosive, which when used figuratively describes "one that has a powerful effect".

And so we have "**dynamic**" (a powerful person or movement), "**dynamo**" (a power-producing machine), and "**dynamite**" (an extremely powerful explosive). These English words suggest (1) adequate power; (2) personal power; (3) perpetual power. Ponder these meanings as you contemplate how they might apply to the phrase "**my witnesses**".

**John Owen** well said that "We have no power from God unless we live in the persuasion that we have none of our own." I would add the corollary that pride (call it self sufficiency or self reliance if you wish, but it's still the same sin in different "dress") impedes the flow of God's power.

**F N Peloubet** comments that "**Power** in the Greek is **dunamis**, of which our word "**dynamite**." is almost a transliteration, and this expresses well the greatness of the power to upheave the obstacles in their way; although the power bestowed was in its action more like that of the sun, which is infinitely greater than all the explosives in the world. This **power** given includes (1) moral and spiritual power; (2) power to overcome temptations, and to do right under the most trying circumstances; (3) power to lead men to the Saviour; (4) power to overcome all enemies and obstacles, though they were like mountains to be cast into the sea; (5) power to work miracles; (6) power to lead the church; (7) power to bring the kingdom of heaven. ([The Teachers' Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles](#))

**H P Liddon** describes the **power** primarily as **spiritual power**...

Spiritual power may be felt rather than described or analyzed. It resides in or it permeates a man's whole circle of activities; it cannot be localized, it cannot be identified exclusively with one of them. It is an unearthly beauty, whose native home is in a higher world, yet which tarries among men from age to age, since the time when the Son of God left us His example (1Pe 2:21), and gave us His Spirit.

It is nothing else than His spiritual presence, mantling upon His servants; they live in Him; they lose in Him something of their proper personality; they are absorbed into, they are transfigured by, a Life altogether higher than their own; His voice blends with theirs, His eye seems to lighten theirs with its sweetness and its penetration; His hand gives gentleness and decision to their acts; His heart communicates a ray of its Divine charity to their life of narrower and more stagnant affection; His soul commingles with theirs, and their life of thought, and feeling, and resolve is irradiated and braced by His.

"If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode (dwelling, abiding place, resting place, mansion) with him." (Jn 14:23) "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father Who speaks in you." (Mt 10:20) ([Acts 1:8 Power for Witness in Great Texts of the Bible - 23 pages](#))

**Illustration of Spiritual Power versus Natural Power** - Suppose we saw an army sitting down before a granite fort, and they told us that they intended to batter it down; we might ask them, "How?" They point to a cannon-ball. Well, there is no power in that; it is heavy, but not more than half a hundred-, or perhaps a hundred-weight; if all the men in the army hurled it against the fort, they would make no impression. They say, "No; but look at the cannon." Well, there is no power in that. A child may ride upon it, a bird may perch in its mouth; it is a machine, and nothing more. "But look at the powder." Well, there is no power in that; a child may spill it, a sparrow may peck it. Yet this powerless powder, and powerless ball, are put into the powerless cannon, one spark of fire enters it, and then, in the twinkling of an eye, that powder is a flash of lightning, and that ball a thunderbolt which smites as if it had been sent from heaven. So is it with our Church machinery at this day: we have all the instruments necessary for pulling down strongholds, and O for the baptism of fire! (W. Arthur, The Tongue of Fire, 309)

**W H Griffith-Thomas** - As we have already seen, this book emphasizes the Divine side of Christianity and makes it prominent and predominant. The witnesses consequently need, and are promised, a supernatural power for the performance of their work. The Holy Spirit thus promised and received equips them with power (dunamis) for service. As the book is carefully studied, this feature will be seen in all its prominence and glory. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Zech 4:6). (Acts

of the Apostles)

**S D Gordon** - There is one inlet of power in the life,—anybody's life—any kind of power, just one inlet,—the Holy Spirit. He is power. He is in every one who opens his door to God. He eagerly enters every open door. He comes in by our invitation and consent. His presence within is the vital thing. (Quiet Talks on Prayer)

One of my favorite verses regarding the **power** of the **Word of God** is found in Luke...

For no (Greek = *ou* = **absolutely no**) **word (rhema)** from God shall be void of power (**adunateo** - which is essentially the antithesis of **dunamai**). (Luke 1:37ASV)

**Weymouth translation:** For no promise from God will be impossible of fulfillment.

Here is an OT parallel from Genesis 18:14ASV - The Greek (Lxx) translation = *me adunatei* (present active indicative) *para to theo rhema*...

**Brenton's translation of the LXX:** Shall anything be impossible with the Lord?...

**My translation of LXX** (Brenton ignores the Greek word "**rhema**" = spoken word. He also translates *adunatei* as future but it is actually present tense. He also translates "theo" as Lord but it is actually "God"). Therefore here is my rendition = Is any spoken word [continually] too difficult for God....

As Peter declares God's "**divine power** (*dunamis*) has granted (perfect tense = an enduring gift) to us everything pertaining to life and godliness" (2Pe 1:3-+).

In summary, believers have everything necessary to be His **witnesses** - His Word of power, the inherent supernatural power of the Gospel message, and the miracle working power of His indwelling Spirit! **What else do we need?**

## **JESUS, DUNAMIS AND DISCIPLES**

**Jesus on power (dunamis) given to the disciples...**

Luke 9:1-+ And He (Jesus) called the twelve (disciples) together, and gave them **power** (it is a Gift even as here in Acts 1:8!) and **authority (exousia** = the right and the might) over all the demons, and to heal diseases.

**Comment:** Notice that even before the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, it was necessary for "**Kingdom workers**" to be enabled by **Divine Dunamis!**

Luke 10:19-+ "Behold, I have given you **authority (exousia** = the right and the might) to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the **power** of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you.

**Comment:** Notice that in context Jesus was sending out the seventy-two in twos to minister in His name and they needed His divine authority and might for ministry! Beloved, if this was their need then, is it not our great need of the hour now?!

(Jesus) And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides **with** you, and will be **in** you. (Jn 14:16-17)

**Comment:** The Spirit was "**with**" them but would be "**in**" them is a promise of the fulfillment of the New Covenant (**Read** Ezekiel 36:26, 27, Jer 31:31-34)

Luke 24:49-+ (**Context:** Lk 24:45-46, 47-48, 50-51)"And behold, I am sending forth the **promise** of My Father upon you (the 11 disciples/apostles); but (strong contrast) you are to stay in the city **until** (+: Not "*if*" but "*until*" - see expressions of time) you are clothed with **power (dunamis)** from on high."

**D L Moody comments:** Some people seem to think they are losing time if they wait on God for His power, and so away they go and work without unction; they are working without any anointing, they are working without any power. ([Secret Power, by D. L. Moody - Online version](#))

**Old Testament examples of Spirit "Upon" Someone:**

Moses = Nu 11:16, 17, 25, 26 (!!!), Nu 24:2, Jdg 3:9, 10, Jdg 6:34, Jdg 11:29, Jdg 14:5, 6, 19, 15:14, Saul = 1Sa 10:6, 10, 11:6 (Contrast 1Sa 18:10), David = 1Sa 16:13, 1Sa 19:20, 1Sa 19:23 (Saul), 1Chr 12:18, 2Chr 20:14, Isa 32:15 (to be fully fulfilled at the inception of the Millennium - Zech 12:10, Ezek 37:12-14, cp Ro 11:26), Isa 42:1, 59:21, Isa 61:1 (Lk 4:18, cp Mt 3:16, 12:18), Ezek 11:5, 37:1.

Acts 1:4-[note](#) "And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had **promised**, "Which," He said," you heard of from Me."

**Comment:** The **promise** of the Father was the **Person** of the Spirit, the **Power** of the Holy Spirit and the **Plan** of the Holy Spirit (Jerusalem, etc).

**D L Moody comments that** "Some people seem to think they are losing time if they wait on God for His power, and so away they go and work without unction; they are working without any anointing, they are working without any power." ([Secret Power, by D. L. Moody - Online version](#))

**Henry Morris** "The **power** associated with the coming of the Holy Spirit on a believer is more than just a dynamic preaching style. It will also involve "**boldness**" and "**great grace**" (Acts 4:31,33) in witnessing, centered in the wisdom of God rather than the wisdom of men (1Corinthians 2:4-6) and manifestation of "the fruit of the Spirit" in one's life (Galatians 5:22-23). ([Defender's Study Bible Notes](#))

**William MacDonald** rightly comments that Spirit given, supernatural **power** is the grand indispensable of Christian witness. A man may be highly talented, intensively trained, and widely experienced, but without spiritual **power** he is ineffective. On the other hand, a man may be uneducated, unattractive, and unrefined, yet let him be endowed with the **power** of the Holy Spirit and the world will turn out to see him burn for God. The fearful disciples needed **power** for witnessing, holy boldness for preaching the gospel."

**MacDonald's** comment bring to mind evangelist **Dwight L. Moody**, a layman who never went to seminary and yet by some accounts preached powerfully to over 100 million people in a day and time when travel was difficult. **C H Spurgeon** is another man who never went to seminary, but whom God used mightily. They were greatly used by God because they relied on the Spirit's power (As Spurgeon would climb up the steps to his preaching pulpit at the Metropolitan Tabernacle each Sunday, with each step he would speak the prayer "I need Thee Holy Spirit, I need Thee Holy Spirit, etc"). The need of the hour is **power!** But beware! While there is genuine Spirit given power based on truth, there is also a subtle counterfeit power based on error. There is a crying need for Spirit given discernment of **Scripture saturated saints**, men and women who have a steady diet of "solid food" which "is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained (gymnazo - rigorous spiritual exercise involving the practice of serious study of the Word.) to discern good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14-+). I know of no more efficient way of cultivating this greatly needed quality of discernment than by learning to study the Bible Inductively.

## THE SECRET OF EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

In his last letter, **Paul** emphasized Timothy's continual great need for supernatural empowerment for effective ministry writing...

You therefore (term of conclusion - check context to see what, why, etc Paul is concluding), my son, **be strong** (present imperative - command) in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. (2Ti 2:1-+)

**Comment:** This was Timothy's need and beloved it is the great need of the present dark hour in America (I am writing Feb, 2012), an hour in which the church seems powerless (for the most part) to be radical salt and light to an increasing God hating society. **Be strong** (**endunamoo** is related to the root word **dunamis**) is not a suggestion but a command calling for Timothy (and all believers in ministry -- we are **ALL** in ministry!) to continually renounce self strength and rely on supernatural Spirit given strength. The **passive voice** signifies that Timothy is the recipient of the power and is to continually keep himself in a position (and attitude) so that he might receive power from the Spirit of Christ indwelling him. What is that position or attitude that is crucial for the receipt of God's power for to be His **witnesses**? James explains that "God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble." (James 4:6) Jesus answered Paul's prayer for removal of the thorn in his side, not by removing the thorn, but by explaining to Paul the secret of power in ministry -- "My **grace** is sufficient for you, for **power** (**dunamis**) is perfected in weakness." Paul replied "Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the **power** (**dunamis**) of Christ may dwell in me." (2Cor 12:9-+)

The greatest evangelist of the 19th century, **D L Moody** once said "Some people think that they are losing time if they wait on God for His **power**; and so they go and work, without unction; they are working without any anointing; they are working without any **power**." (Ouch!)

In his book entitled [Secret Power \(online\)](#), **D L Moody** writes...

One man may have "zeal without knowledge," while another may have knowledge without zeal. If I could have only the one, I believe I should choose the first; but, with an open Bible, no one need be without knowledge of

God's will and purpose; and the object of this book is to help others to know the source of true power, that both their zeal and their knowledge may be of increased service in the Master's work. Paul says, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable;" but I believe one portion, and that the subject of this book, has been too much overlooked, as though it were not practical, and the result is lack of power in testimony and work. If we would work, "not as one that beats the air," (1Cor 9:26) but to some definite purpose, **we must have this power from on high. Without this power, our work will be drudgery. With it, it becomes a joyful task, a refreshing service.** May God make this book a blessing to many. This is my prayer. D. L. MOODY. NORTHFIELD, MASS., May 1st, 1881.

"Without the soul, divinely quickened and inspired, the observances of the grandest ritualism are as worthless as the motions of a galvanized corpse." -Anonymous

I quote this sentence, as it leads me at once to the subject under consideration. What is this quickening and inspiration? What is this power needed? From whence its source? I reply: **The Holy Spirit of God.** I am a full believer in "The Apostles' Creed," and therefore "I believe in the Holy Ghost." A writer has pointedly asked: "What are our souls without His grace? - as dead as the branch in which the sap does not circulate (cp Jn 15:5). What is the Church without Him? - as parched and barren as the fields without the dew and rain of heaven." (cp Jn 6:63) There has been much inquiry of late on the subject of the Holy Spirit. In this and other lands thousands of persons have been giving attention to the study of this grand theme. I hope it will lead us all to pray for the greater manifestation of His power upon the whole Church of God. How much we have dishonored Him in the past! How ignorant of His grace, and love and presence we have been? True, we have heard of Him and read of Him, but we have had little intelligent knowledge of His attributes, His offices and His relations to us. I fear He has not been to many professed Christians an actual existence, nor is He known to them as a personality of the Godhead....

...The Holy Spirit is closely identified with the words of the Lord Jesus. "It is the Spirit that quickens (gives life); the flesh profits nothing, the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (Jn 6:63) **The Gospel proclamation can not be divorced from the Holy Spirit. Unless He attend the word in power, vain will be the attempt in preaching it.** Human eloquence or persuasiveness of speech are the mere trappings of the dead, if the living Spirit be absent; the prophet may preach to the bones in the valley, but it must be the breath from Heaven which will cause the slain to live....

...It is the work of the Spirit to impress the heart and seal the preached word. His office is to take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto us....

...We can not work for God without love. It is the only tree that can produce fruit on this sin-cursed earth, that is acceptable to God. If I have no love for God nor for my fellow man, then I can not work acceptably. I am like sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. We are told that "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." (Ro 5:5) Now, if we have had that love shed abroad in our hearts, we are ready for God's service; if we have not, we are not ready. It is so easy to reach a man when you love him; all barriers are broken down and swept away....

...WHAT IS NEEDED. Nine-tenths, at least, of the church members never think of speaking for Christ. If they see a man, perhaps a near relative, just going right down to ruin, going rapidly, they never think of speaking to him about his sinful course and of seeking to win him to Christ. Now certainly there must be something wrong. And yet when you talk with them you find they have faith, and you can not say they are not children of God; but they have not the power, they have not the liberty, they have not the love that real disciples of Christ should have. A great many people are thinking that we need new measures, that we need new churches, that we need new organs, and that we need new choirs, and all these new things. That is not what the Church of God needs to-day. It is the old power that the Apostles had; that is what we want, and if we have that in our churches, there will be new life. Then we will have new ministers--the same old ministers renewed with power; filled with the Spirit. I remember when in Chicago many were toiling in the work, and it seemed as though the car of salvation didn't move on, when a minister began to cry out from the very depths of his heart, "Oh, God, put new ministers in every pulpit." On next Monday I heard two or three men stand up and say, "We had a new minister last Sunday--the same old minister, but he had got new power," and I firmly believe that is what we want to-day all over America. We want new ministers in the pulpit and new people in the pews. We want people quickened by the Spirit of God, and the Spirit coming down and taking possession of the children of God and giving them power....

...Skeptics and infidels may say they don't believe in it. It is not our work to make them believe in it; that is the work of the Spirit. Our work is to give them the Word of God; not to preach our theories and our ideas about it,



but just to deliver the message as God gives it to us....

.... If a man is filled with the Spirit, he will magnify the Word; he will preach the Word, and not himself; he will give this lost world the Word of the living God....

....Now I tell you when the Spirit of God is on us for service, resting upon us, we are anointed, and then we can do great things....I would like to see some one just full of living water; so full that they couldn't contain it; that they would have to go out and publish the Gospel of the grace of God. When a man gets so full that he can't hold any more, then he is just ready for God's service.

Here are some other quotes that relate to the great need of believers for **power** from the **Holy Spirit** in order to be Christ's **witnesses**...

In vain do the inhabitants of London go to their conduits for supply unless the man who has the master-key turns the water on; and in vain do we think to quench our thirst at ordinances, unless God communicates the living water of His Spirit.--**Anonymous** (cp John 7:37,38,39)

It was the custom of the Roman emperors, at their triumphal entrance, to cast new coins among the multitudes; so doth Christ (Acts 1:8), in His triumphal ascension into heaven (Acts 1:9), throw the greatest gifts for the good of men that were ever given.--**Thomas Goodwin**.

To unconverted persons, a great part of the Bible resembles a letter written *incipher*. The blessed Spirit's office is to act as God's *Decipherer*, by letting His people into the secret of celestial experience, as the key and clue to those sweet mysteries of grace which were before as a garden shut up, or as a fountain sealed, or as a book written in an unknown character.--**Augustus Toplady**. (cp Eph 1:18, 19)

## **GOD'S PERFECT TIMING**

**When** - Not "if" but "when" - His coming was a certainty. His power was assured. All they had to do was tarry, to wait.

**The Holy Spirit** - Not an "it", nor a "thing", nor a spiritual "effect." No! He is a Person, the Third Person of the Godhead. He is One Jesus asked for from the Father. He the one the Father promised to send. He is the One Who would accompany the New Heart of the New Covenant. He is the One associated with power, supernatural power, miracle working power, necessary power, sufficient power, power to be Christ's witnesses.

We cannot cover all of the passages that relate to the promised gift of the Spirit but here are several from the lips of Jesus spoken some 40 days prior to the events of Acts chapter 1...

John 14:16 "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another **Helper**, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the **Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because **He** abides with you, and will be in you. 18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."

**Comment:** Observe (1) the indwelling of the Spirit is forever, which implies He will be in us in eternity future. (2) the promise that the Spirit would one day dwell "in" them (3) Jesus saying "I will come to you" but how? Surely a reference to the Spirit of Christ Who came at Pentecost and Who now comes to indwell every believer.

John 14:25 "These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you. 26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 15:26 "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me, 27 and you will **bear witness** (martureo) also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

John 16:7 "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

**E. M. Bounds** once said "The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods but through men. He does not come on machinery but on

men. He does not anoint plans but men—men of prayer."

**A W Tozer** commenting on "Ye shall receive power." explained that "By those words our Lord raised the expectation of His disciples and taught them to look forward to the coming of a supernatural potency into their natures from a source outside of themselves. It was to be something previously unknown to them, but suddenly to come upon them from another world. It was to be nothing less than God Himself entering into them with the purpose of ultimately reproducing His own likeness within them.... This power is to come upon powerless men as a gentle but resistless invasion from another world bringing a moral potency infinitely beyond anything that might be stirred up from within. This power is sufficient; no additional help is needed, no auxiliary source of spiritual energy....Power came upon the Church, such power as had never been released into human nature before (with the lone exception of that mighty anointing which came upon Christ by the waters of Jordan). That power, still active in the Church, has enabled her to exist for nearly twenty centuries."

**Has come upon you** (1904) (**eperchomai** from **epi** = upon + **erchomai** = come) means literally to come upon or over a person or place. To draw near which can refer to people, events or time as shown in the nine NT uses. To come upon in the sense of arriving (Acts 14:19). To come upon in the sense of something happening or occurring (Acts 8:24) **Eperchomai** is used by Luke twice to describe the Holy Spirit coming upon individuals (Mary Lk 1:35+, apostles Acts 1:8). Luke 21:26+ uses **eperchomai** in a prophetic sense of coming global and heavenly catastrophic events. Luke 11:22+ uses **eperchomai** to signify coming upon in a hostile sense, so as to assault someone.

**Epi** and **erchomai** the root words of **eperchomai** are used in the Lxx translation of Isaiah 32:15 where the Greek can be rendered "until the Spirit **has come** (erchomai) **upon** (epi) you from on high." The context is the prophet speaking of the desolation of Israel which will continue until "the Spirit is poured out on us from on high." (cf Joel 2:28-29+) The point is that in Acts, the fulfillment of the promise of the Spirit on all of the Jewish remnant (cf Zech 12:10-14+) is a sign that marks God's end-time restoration of Israel. Acts 1:8 however envisions a worldwide mission. The complete fulfillment of Isaiah 32:15 (Israel's restoration, specifically the believing Jewish remnant) awaits the return of Messiah (Ro 11:26-27-note, Zech 13:1+, Zech 13:8-9+).

**Has come** is in the **aorist tense** which indicates the Spirit's coming is to be a definite historical event, not a continuous coming. He will **come** on believers at a given point in time, specifically on the day of Pentecost. It is important to clarify that since the time of the book of Acts, every believer has been "baptized" (in the sense of identified with) the Holy Spirit at the time of their new birth. Conversely, if a person does not possess the Holy Spirit, they are not born again. (See Romans 8:9). Baptism with the Spirit is a one time event, while filling with the Spirit is a repeated experience. Our goal as followers of Christ should be to continually seek to obey Paul's command to "be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). When He fills us, He will control us and empower us. Is this mysterious? It is to me, but it is the great need of every blood bought, heaven bound believer until the day they see the Lord face to face!

The renowned Bible teacher **Donald Grey Barnhouse** said that "No one may ask a believer whether he has been baptized with the Spirit. The very fact that a man is in the body of Christ demonstrates that he has been baptized with the Spirit, for there is no other way of entering the body."

**David G Peterson** has an interesting summary of the **coming of the Spirit** noting that His coming can be described metaphorically in terms of "**clothing** (Lk. 24:49), **baptism** (Acts 1:5; 11:16), **coming upon** (Acts 1:8; 19:6), **falling upon** (Acts 8:16; 10:44; 11:15), **pouring out** (Acts 2:17-18, 33; 10:45), **reception** (Acts 1:8; 2:38; 8:15, 17, 19; 10:47; 19:2), and **filling** (Acts 2:4; 9:17). These are complementary metaphors, used interchangeably in some contexts, and designed to express different aspects of the same experience. One should not be elevated above the others as an interpretive key to the rest. (The Acts of the Apostles. Pillar Commentary)

**Jeff Strite**: Theologically many people accept the idea that God's Holy Spirit can live within us, but they don't think that Spirit does very much... and thus they miss out on the miracle of what that Holy Spirit can mean for us. It's easy to see how this can happen. There are a lot of churches that teach things about the Holy Spirit that are bizarre and unbiblical... however, we shouldn't allow those bad teachings or any other distraction to cause us to forget uniqueness that God's Spirit can have in our lives. . . It's my belief that part of our frustration in our witnessing can come from not understanding the pivotal role that the Holy Spirit can play in helping us share our faith. . .

**Illustration**: A skeptic promised British preacher Alexander Maclaren (1826-1910) that he would attend his church for four Sundays on which Maclaren would be presenting the main tenets of Christianity. The skeptic listened intently to Maclaren's sermons. After the fourth message he presented himself for church membership, saying he had received Christ as his Savior. Maclaren was delighted and could not resist the impulse to ask which of the four sermons brought him to this decision. The skeptic replied, "Your sermons, sir, were helpful, but they were not what finally persuaded me." He said that after church one Sunday as he was helping an elderly lady on a slippery walk, she looked up into his face and said, "I wonder if you know my Savior, Jesus Christ. He is everything in the world to me. I would like you to know Him too." "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," says the LORD Almighty. Zec 4:6

As a fellow physician, I particularly love Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones metaphorical description of the Holy Spirit "If it were possible to put the Holy Spirit into a textbook of pharmacology I would put Him under the stimulants, for that is where He belongs."

Come, Holy Spirit, God and Lord!  
Be all thy graces now out-poured  
On the believer's mind and soul,  
To strengthen, save, and make us whole.  
--Martin Luther

### And you shall be My witnesses: esesthe (shall be) mou martures:

- **My witnesses:** Acts 1:22 Acts 2:32 Acts 3:15 Acts 4:33 Acts 5:32 10:39-41 Acts 13:31 22:15 Mt 28:19 Mk 16:15 Lk 24:46-49 Jn 15:27
- [Acts Video - 3 hours - Luke's Introduction](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### CAN I GET A WITNESS?

**You shall be** - When? In the future. Note Jesus does not say "you shall **do**" but "you shall **be**." There's an eternity of difference between "being" and "doing." Too many in the church accentuate the "doing" at the expense of the "being" and the result is (supernatural) power failure!

As **Adrian Rogers** once said "We are to be witnesses. Now Jesus didn't call us to be lawyers. A lot of you say, "Well, you know, I just can't witness." Of course you can. Suppose you saw an accident, and they brought you into the courtroom, and they said, "Tell us what you saw." You say, "Well, you know, I just can't do that. I'm not a lawyer. I'm not trained. I've never been in a courtroom before." "Look: just the facts, ma'am—just tell us what you saw and what you heard." A witness is not a lawyer. A lawyer argues a case; a witness tells what he has seen and heard. Now if Jesus Christ has done anything for you, then you're to witness to it."

**Wiersbe** - "**Witness**" is a key word in the Book of Acts and is used twenty-nine times as either a verb or a noun. We hear a great deal these days about "soul winning," and the emphasis is a good one. However, while some of God's people have a calling to evangelism (Eph. 4:11), all of God's people are expected to be witnesses and tell the lost about the Saviour. Not every Christian can bring a sinner to the place of faith and decision (though most of us could do better), but every Christian can bear faithful witness to the Saviour.

**W H Griffith-Thomas** on **witnesses** -They were now to be witnesses, and their definite work was to bear testimony to their Master; they were not to be theologians, or philosophers, or leaders, but witnesses. Whatever else they might become, everything was to be subordinate to the idea of personal testimony. It was to call attention to what they knew of Him and to deliver His message to mankind. This special class of people, namely, disciples who are also witnesses, is therefore very prominent in this book. Page after page is occupied by their testimony, and the key to this feature is found in the words of Peter: 'We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard' (Acts 4:20)..(The Acts of the Apostles)

**My witnesses** - There are two possible meanings -- The first sense is witnesses **about** Jesus (objective genitive) giving testimony of His life, death and resurrection. The second sense is witnesses **of** Jesus (possessive genitive) as those who belong to Him and are His feet on the ground so to speak. Luke 24:44-48 (cp also Acts 4:33 and Acts 10:42) would tend to favor that the intended meaning is witnesses who help establish the truthfulness of Jesus life, death, burial and resurrection by testifying firsthand about Him (even to the point of death, our English word *martyr*) .

Now He said to them (to His apostles), "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance (Jesus directly refutes those in the modern church who say you do not need to preach repentance! cp Mk 1:15, Peter in Acts 2:38) for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem (cp Acts 1:8). 48 "**You are witnesses of these things.** 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:44-48)

**A T Robertson** - In Luke 24:48 Jesus calls the disciples "witnesses to these things" (objective genitive).

**Ray Pritchard** says that "The dictionary defines the word **"witness"** this way: "One who has seen or heard something" and "One who furnishes evidence." A witness is someone who can say, "I know this is true." In a court of law a witness swears on a Bible and promises to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Witnesses tell the truth, and if they are good witnesses, that is all they do. A witness tells nothing less than the truth—and nothing more either....A witness is a person who tells the truth about Jesus Christ. The disciples testified to the things they knew to be true about Jesus Christ. Above all, they testified to the truth of the resurrection. Let me apply this very simply. You don't have to be a theologian to be a witness for Christ. You don't have to go to Bible school or seminary and you don't have to be a missionary. It doesn't require a college degree or a high IQ. Just tell the truth about Jesus to anyone who is willing to listen. That's where witnessing always begins. ([You Will Be My Witnesses](#))

Am I a soldier of the cross, a follower of the Lamb,  
And shall I fear to own his cause, or blush to speak his name?

Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease,  
While others fought to win the prize, and sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face? Must I not stem the flood?  
Is this vile world a friend to grace, to help me on to God?

Sure, I must fight if I would reign; increase my courage, Lord;  
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain, supported by thy word.

**A T Pierson on you shall be My witnesses** - And the whole narrative which is thus prefaced with such a promise shows us its importance; for here we see disciples (apostles), thus [endued](#), becoming to the world what the Spirit has become to them. In them He so incarnates Himself that through them He works upon others, so that, by the indwelling Holy Spirit, they become, like Him, teachers of truth, guiding into all truth; anointed witnesses, testifying to Christ and glorifying Christ; inspired witnesses, not speaking from themselves, but receiving of the things of Christ and showing them to men; effective witnesses, convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and even prophetic witnesses, showing things to come

We wait, O Lord, Thy power to know,  
Before we forth to service go,  
Or else we serve in vain.  
We trust not human thought or might,  
Our souls are helpless for the fight,  
Until that power we gain.  
(cf Zechariah 4:6)

**Dr. Howard Hendricks** adds that "It's not, *"You are going to be witnesses and then receive power,"* but the other way around: *"You are going to receive power, the result of which is, you are going to be witnesses."* That's an interesting point, because often we spend a lot of time trying to urge people to witness concerning the faith. Yet nothing inside of them would ever warrant their doing that. They have nothing to share with others, and if they tried, they would be doing nothing but putting on an act. By contrast, suppose one of my female seminary students gets engaged over the summer. In the fall, she walks into my class, and the first thing you know she's waving her ring finger in front of my face. I never have to beg her to show me her ring. No, there's something inside that compels her to take the initiative. She's in love with a man, and she's got to share it. She can't keep it to herself. That's the kind of dynamic Luke wants us to see in this passage. As a result of what the apostles receive, they are going to be witnesses. But whose witnesses? Christ's witnesses. His by personal identification. They are going to represent Him. (Living by the Book)

**Be** (conduct) a witness first so you can then **give** (speak) a witness! **William Barclay** wrote that "the real witness is not of words but of deeds. When Stanley had discovered Livingstone in Central Africa and had spent some time with him, he said, "If I had been with him any longer I would have been compelled to be a Christian and he never spoke to me about it at all." The witness of the man's life was irresistible." Of course one can carry this example too far as in a saying I have heard many times -- "Go to the world and preach the Gospel. If necessary use words" (probably falsely attributed to Francis of Assisi). This saying sounds good, but is not thoroughly Biblical. How will they hear without someone preaching? (Read Ro 10:13-15, 17) And so empowered by the Spirit, Who gives boldness to speak, we unashamedly speak the Gospel, testifying that Jesus is alive.

[Dr W H Houghton](#), pastored the Calvary Baptist Church in NYC and later served as president of Moody Bible Institute. When Dr. Houghton became pastor of the Baptist Tabernacle in Atlanta, a man in that city hired a private detective to follow Dr. Houghton and report on his conduct. After a few weeks, the detective was able to report to the man that Dr. Houghton's life matched his preaching. As a result of Houghton's faithful life as God's ["POIEMA"](#), that man became a Christian.

**Adrian Rogers** - A Christian with a glowing witness — is worth a library full of arguments. (Ed: Remember we are empowered to be

witnesses, not lawyers!)

**A J Gordon** - Before Pentecost the disciples found it hard to do easy things; after Pentecost they found it easy to do hard things.

There are two requirements necessary for one to **be a witness** - (1) A witness must have seen that about which he or she seeks to bear witness. (2) A witness must tell others what he or she has seen.

**Frank Allen** - A witness must know, not merely by hear-say, whereof he speaks. Those who are to be witnesses for Christ must know Christ. They must know Christ so well that no amount of cross-examination can pervert their testimony. The world is constantly cross-examining the Christian. Men of the world are watching us at our work, in our trading, in our buying, in our selling, in our homes, at our worship, in our prayers, in our teaching, in our preaching, in our giving and in all our ways of living. If our testimony breaks down in any part it may lose its entire effect.

A **witness** is one who gives testimony to an event, person or circumstance. So a witness is one who has seen something, experienced something, heard something. For 3 ½ years these apostles had lived intimately with the Savior and now as a result of their contact with the Holy Spirit and His provision of power they are going to be totally different people. Up until now the apostles have been living primarily in their own strength and the results have not been too impressive! Now they are going to be the Savior's witnesses in the power of the Spirit!

Notice that a witness does not need to have complete understanding of what they have witnessed (Cp Jesus' description of the "new birth" John 3:6,7). Furthermore a witness does not need to be eloquent, convincing, clever, persuasive, articulate or a seminary graduate! The greatest evangelist of the 1800's (and probably of all time) was **Dwight L Moody** (called "Crazy Moody") who had only a fifth grade education and yet this Spirit filled and empowered man was used by God to "witness" to more than 100 million souls! Remember that God is not as interested in your **ability** (to be His witness) but in your **availability**! **Are you available?** A witness for Jesus simply needs to tell others what they know to be true. **What** have you seen that you can relate to others? If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then you have seen Jesus change your life (2Cor 5:17-+) and you can tell others what He about this miraculous supernatural transformation! Have you ever given your testimony of the life changing Gospel of grace? (Spurgeon's Personal Testimony; My Personal Testimony)

**Witnesses** (3144) (**martus/martys**) basically describes one who remembers something and testifies concerning what they remember. Notice that **martus** has a two fold meaning of (1) describing one who has seen and/or experienced something or someone and (2) one who testifies to what he or she saw. A **martus** is one who attests to a fact or event, one who gives evidence (testifies in a court to the truth of a fact or event), one who has seen or has personal knowledge of something or someone, especially as an "eye witness". Note that the Greek word martus/martys is the root of our English martyr. Indeed, a witness of Jesus must be prepared to become a literal **martyr** (one who suffers for the sake of principle, even to the point of death). To be a witness means to be loyal to Christ whatever the cost.

Acts 13:31 explains that "for many days He (JESUS) appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His **witnesses** to the people." They were eye witnesses of Jesus.

In Luke's Gospel Jesus had declared to the apostles "You are **witnesses** of these things." (Luke 24:48-+) And now in Acts 1:8 Jesus instructs them to go out and tell of Whom they have been witnesses. As a result, this rag tag group of apostles, empowered by the Spirit of Jesus, went out and boldly told the world about Jesus Whom had witnessed as the One Who had been crucified and buried but Who rose from the dead....

Acts 2:32 "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all **witnesses**.

Acts 3:15 but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are **witnesses**.

Acts 5:32 "And we are **witnesses** of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

Acts 10:39 "We are **witnesses** of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.

Acts 22:15 For you will be a **witness** for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard.

Acts 22:20 'And when the blood of Your **witness** Stephen was being shed, I also was standing by approving, and watching out for the coats of those who were slaying him.'

Acts 26:16 'But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a **witness** not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you;



## Luke's uses of **martus** -

Lk. 11:48; 24:48

Acts 1:8; 1:22; Acts 2:32; Acts 3:15; Acts 5:32; Acts 6:13; Acts 7:58; Acts 10:39; Acts 10:41; Acts 13:31; Acts 22:15; Acts 22:20; Acts 26:16

**John** gives one of the best descriptions of the witness of the apostles. Notice his repetition regarding what they had seen!

What was from the beginning, what we **have heard**, what we **have seen** with our eyes, what **we have looked at** and **touched** with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— and the life was manifested, and **we have seen** and **testify** and **proclaim** to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—**what we have seen and heard** we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:1-3-+)

**Hastings** writes that our "**witness** must be in the Holy Spirit. Without the gift and presence of the Holy Spirit our **witness** is bound to be a failure and a disappointment. Let none of us be content with a lower spiritual experience than God is willing to give us. As long as we keep our witness within the bounds of what we can obviously succeed in, we shall accomplish little, but when in abandonment of self, and in reliance on the Holy Spirit, we attempt great things for God, our success will exceed our highest hopes."

Attempt great things for God

Expect great things from God.

--[William Carey](#)

**S D Gordon** - There has come to you some bit of a call to service, to teach a class, or to write a special letter, or speak a word, or take up something needing to be done. And you hesitate. You think that you cannot. You are not fit, you think; not qualified. The thing to do is to do it. If the call is clear, go ahead. Need is one of the strong calling voices of God. It is always safe to respond. Put out your foot in the answering swing, even though you cannot see clearly the place to put it down. God attends to that part. Power comes as we go (cf 2 Cor 2:16, 2 Cor 3:5-6).

**C. C. Albertson** - There is an interesting story of [Gustave Doré](#), the artist, that once, crossing the Italian frontier, he had mislaid his passport and was called upon to prove his identity. This he did by taking a sheet of common paper and a piece of charcoal, and tracing the homely, manly features of Victor Emmanuel. The officers knew that only Doré could draw like that. Challenged by the world as we are, is it not for us to trace, here and now, on the rough surface of our common lives, with only such instruments as our ordinary circumstances afford, the character of our King? "**By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples.**"

**Ray Pritchard** applies these truths asking the question - **Do you want to be a witness?...Testify to Jesus Christ?...Speak up for Him?** "But I stammer," you say. That's okay! The Holy Spirit doesn't stammer. He can speak clearly through your halting words. "But I'm too shy to witness." Don't worry about your shyness. Let the Lord speak through you. "I don't know enough Bible." No one knows enough Bible. Work at it. While you work at it, tell what you know and leave the results with God. "What if I make mistakes?" You probably will, and that's okay, too. The Holy Spirit does not make mistakes, and He can cause people to forget your mistakes. Perhaps you have one final objection. "I'm afraid it won't work." When people say that, they usually are thinking of someone they know who seems hardened against the Gospel. Usually we think it won't work when we have tried and tried but haven't gotten anywhere. When you think that the Gospel won't work, remember this fact: It worked with you. If it worked with you, it can work with someone else. Don't ever give up on the Gospel because you think it won't work. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would work through your testimony. Let me leave you with this personal definition: **A witness is anyone who cooperates with the Holy Spirit in telling others about Jesus.** All God needs is a little cooperation from his people. When he gets it, we can change the world. God invites us to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in telling others about Jesus. This is God's job description for every Christian. If we will do our part, we may be sure that the Holy Spirit will do his. Now what are you going to do about it? I'm asking each person who reads this message to do two things. **1. Pray** that God would give you a chance to witness for Christ this week. **2. Commit** to speaking up when God gives you the opportunity you prayed for. Witnessing seems frightening to many people. Before you can speak up for Jesus, you need to forget your fears, let go of past failures in this area, trust God to use you, and ask the Holy Spirit to fill you. Will you join me and hundreds of others in praying for a chance to share Christ this week? And will you commit to speaking up when God answers that prayer? Remember, if we will do our part, God will certainly do His. All He needs is a little cooperation from His people. ([You Will Be My Witnesses](#))

---

**Frank Allen** gives us the example of a witness who God's Spirit used to change the entire face of missions. His name was [William Carey](#)

"Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen

thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes" (Isa. 54:2)

The missionary work had so languished that in the early days of William Carey, a little over a century ago, he could not stir his congregation to take an interest in missions, nor could he even arouse an interest among the ministers of the Gospel in his community in this great work. When he preached his great sermon on the second verse of the fifty fourth chapter of Isaiah the people were not moved. One who writes of that memorable occasion says, he would have thought the congregation would have wept. But they did not weep, they did not even wait after the sermon. They started to go out as usual.

But Mr. Carey stepping down from the pulpit grasped Andrew Fuller by the hand and said, "Fuller, call them back! Are we going to do nothing today?" The result was that some of them did come back, they were interested and the foreign missionary society was organized which sent Carey out as pioneer missionary. Does it not seem pathetic that seventeen centuries after the Book of Acts was written there should still be the need of pioneer work in the foreign missionary enterprise? We pride ourselves on our interest in missions and in the world today. But pick up the Book of Acts and read again the final commission of Jesus; read again almost any place in the Book of the fire of the early church, and you will surely conclude that their energy, their sacrifice and their successes puts us to shame.

We should read again the final commission of Jesus! We should hear again the call that beginning at home we should carry the Gospel message to the uttermost parts of the earth! We should awaken to a sense of our responsibility and in consecration, in work, in prayer, in giving and in witnessing give ourselves into the hands of the Holy Spirit to be used of the Lord when He will and where He will!

See also this biography - [Life of William Carey, Shoemaker and Missionary by George Smith](#)

**both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.**

- **Samaria:** Acts 8:5-25
- **even to the remotest part of the earth:** Ps 22:27 98:3 Isa 42:10 49:6 52:10 66:19 Jer 16:19 Mt 24:14 Ro 10:18 15:19
- [Acts Video - 3 hours](#) - [Luke's Introduction](#)

## **EVER EXPANDING CONCENTRIC CIRCLES WITNESSING TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH**

**Pfeiffer** calls Acts 1:8 a "**table of contents** of the book of Acts:

In Jerusalem Acts 1:1-7:58; in all Judea, and in Samaria covers Acts 8:1-11:18; and unto the uttermost part of the earth covers 11:19 to the end of the book." (The Wycliffe Bible Commentary)

**Merrill Unger** suggests this division

Acts 1:1-8:3 - Jerusalem,  
Acts 8:4-12:24 Judea and Samaria, |  
Acts 12:25-28:31 Paul as a witness "to the remotest part of the earth"

As **Adrian Rogers** said our witness starts in your own Jerusalem - "It starts in Jerusalem—no leapfrog here. A man came to a foreign mission board and said, "I want to be a missionary." They interviewed him. They said, "What are you doing for Jesus here?" He said, "Not much of anything." They said, "Well, please, for God's sake, don't go overseas and do it. Don't export it." Have you been Jesus' witness in "your Jerusalem?"...your family?...your neighborhood?...your school?...your workplace? Begin in "your Jerusalem."...Finally, this witness to Christ is to go to the uttermost part of the earth. We never should lose sight of the fact that this is the Lord's intention. He has told us if we love Him to keep His commandments. His command is personal. We can't pass this off on the crowd, and say "The church is doing it; so I don't need to get involved." How much are you involved, friend? What is your witness to Christ?

**W H Griffith-Thomas** - The purpose is to be accomplished through a Special Pathway of Progress, "In Jerusalem ... Samaria ... the uttermost part of the earth." These words indicate both the substance of the book and also the progress of extension of early Christianity. The historical aspect is to be considered. In chapters 1-7 we have the Church in Jerusalem; in chapters 8 and 9 the Church in Judaea and Samaria; in chapters 10-28 the Church of the Gentile world leading up to Rome, which to a Jew would be "the uttermost part of the earth." The book is thus built up of historical material, giving the pathway of progress from the capital of the Jewish to the capital of the Gentile world. The spiritual aspect is also noteworthy. It is not fanciful to give attention to the spiritual suggestions of these three different regions:— (i) Witnessing to the Jews meant witnessing to those who held a true religion, but

held it for the most part falsely and unreally. (ii) Witnessing in Samaria meant witnessing to those who had a mixed religion, partly true, and partly false, Jewish and Heathen. (iii) Witnessing to the uttermost part of the earth meant witnessing to those who had no real and vital religion at all. Note: We can see the modern counterpart of these three in the present day:—(1) Home Missions; (2) Missions to those religious systems which have an admixture of truth and error; (3) Missions to the Heathen. (The Acts of the Apostles)

**J Vernon McGee** echoes Rogers writing that "In **Jerusalem**," which applied to us means our hometown, there should be a witness to Christ. "All **Judea**" is equivalent to our community; "Samaria" represents the other side of the tracks, the folk we don't associate with. Although we may not meet with these people socially, we are to take the gospel to them

**Oswald J. Smith** used to say, "The light that shines the farthest will shine the brightest at home."

**Both in Jerusalem - Jerusalem** - Also known as Salem, Ariel, Jebus, the "city of God," the "holy city," Zion, "City of David,". This is the most important city in the Bible, the specific name Jerusalem occurring 810 times in 762 verses in the NASB (1977). We see the Gospel version of Jesus' mission to His apostles in the last verses of Luke 24...

He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, **beginning from Jerusalem**. 48 "You are witnesses of these things. 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 51 While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. 52 And they, after worshiping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple praising God. (Luke 24:46-53-+)

**Criswell** - These verses indicate the fact that the Book of Acts is Luke's second volume and begins where his Gospel concludes. Compare the many points of contact found in Luke 24:46-53 and Acts 1:1-14: (1) suffering, (2) resurrection, (3) witnesses, (4) the Promise of the Father, (5) tarrying in Jerusalem, (6) power from on high, (7) ascension, (8) return to Jerusalem, and (9) meeting in the temple

**And in all Judea and Samaria** - [See this map](#) for the outward expansion of the Gospel.

**Judea** - In New Testament times Judea designated the southern portion of Israel, south of Samaria, and comprising land from what had been the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Dan, Simeon, and part of Ephraim.

**Samaria** - The district between Galilee and Judea, and between the Jordan river and the Mediterranean Sea. **A T Robertson** observes that once the Jews "had been commanded to avoid **Samaria** (Matthew 10:5), but now it is included in the world program as already outlined on the mountain in Galilee (Mt 28:19; Mk 16:15). Jesus is on Olivet (Mount of Olives just east of Temple Mount and the Old City of Jerusalem) as he points to **Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the uttermost** (Greek = *eschatos* = *last*, compare "*eschatology*" the study of last things, i.e., prophecy) **part of the earth**. The program still beckons us on to world conquest for Christ."

Think about what Jesus is saying. He is speaking to Jews and telling them to be His witnesses in Samaria, which orthodox Jews in Jesus' day would not even walk through, much less share good news of the Gospel. But when the Gospel comes into a person's heart, it transforms one's heart from hatred (Jews hated Samaritans) to one of the Father's love.

**A T Robertson** - "*The Acts themselves form the best commentary on these words, and the words themselves might be given as the best summary of the Acts*" (Page). The events follow this outline (Jerusalem till the end of Acts 7, with the martyrdom of Stephen, the scattering of the saints through Judea and Samaria in Acts 8, the conversion of Saul, Acts 9, the spread of the gospel to Romans in Caesarea by Peter (Acts 10), to Greeks in Antioch (Acts 11), finally Paul's world tours and arrest and arrival in Rome (Acts 11 to 28).

**Kistemaker** - They preach the gospel in the Judean and Samaritan countryside, and eventually they take it to Rome. Rome was the imperial capital from which all roads extended, like spokes in a wheel, to the ends of the then-known world (cf. Isa. 5:26, "the ends of the earth"). In the third Gospel, Luke directs attention to Jerusalem, where Jesus suffers, dies, rises from the dead, and ascends. In Acts, he focuses on Rome as the destination of Christ's gospel. From Rome the Good News reaches the entire world. (Baker NT Commentary: Acts)

**Longnecker** gives us a wonderful description of what every church should be today - "The Christian church, according to Acts, is a **missionary church** that responds obediently to Jesus' commission, acts on Jesus' behalf in the extension of his ministry, focuses its proclamation of the kingdom of God in its witness to Jesus, is guided and empowered by the self-same Spirit that directed and supported Jesus' ministry, and follows a program whose guidelines for outreach have been set by Jesus himself... (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

**Constable on remotest parts of the earth** - The phrase "to the remotest part of the earth" is literally "to the end of the earth." It is rare in ancient Greek, but it occurs five times in the Septuagint (Isa. 8:9; 48:20; 49:6; 62:11; Psalm of Sol. 1:4). Jesus was evidently alluding to Isaiah's predictions that God would extend salvation to all people, Gentiles as well as Jews. (Ed: See the Journal Articles below for more discussion) ([Acts 1 Expository Notes](#))

**The remotest parts of the earth** (*eos eschatou tes ges*) - Some commentaries consider this phrase to be a Jewish idiom for Gentiles. Jesus instructs His apostles (and by application all disciples) to cross all regional, cultural, and geographical barriers to share His Gospel of grace which has the inherent power to give spiritual life to the spiritually dead. **The remotest parts of the earth** recalls God's words to His **Son** in Isaiah...

It is too small a thing that **You** (God the Son) should be My **Servant** to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make **You** (Jesus) a light (Jn 8:12, 9:5) of the (Gentile) nations so that **My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.** (Lxx =*eos eschatou tes ges*)" (Isaiah 49:6)

**Comment:** In the Septuagint translation of this verse the phrase "**to the end of the earth**" is identical to the Greek phrase in Acts 1:8. It is as if in the Isaiah passage the Father gives this charge to His Son and in Acts the Son gives the charge to His disciples who are to be empowered by His Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7). It is notable that the apostle Paul applied Isaiah 49:6 to his ministry to the Gentiles in Acts 13:47 "'For so the Lord has commanded us, 'I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU MAY BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.'" ([Paul's First Missionary Journey](#)).

#### Related Resources - Journal Articles

- [E Earle Ellis - The End of the Earth \(Acts 1:8\) - Bulletin for Biblical Research 1991, page 123-32](#)
- [Thomas Moore -To the End of the Earth': The Geographical and Ethnic Universalism of Acts 1:8 in Light of Isaianic Influence on Luke - JETS 40/3, 1997](#)
- [John F. Maile - "The Ascension in Luke-Acts." Tyndale Bulletin 37 \(1986\):29-59](#)

Here is a table of the progressive outreach of the Gospel (modified from Constable)

THE "RIPPLE EFFECT" OF THE GOSPEL IN ACTS THRU SPIRIT FILLED MEN AND WOMEN				
	Center	Main Evangelist	Gospel Goes Forth to...	Ethnicity Evangelized
Acts 1-12	Jerusalem	Peter	Judea and Samaria	Jewish
Acts 13-28	Antioch	Paul	The uttermost part of the earth	Gentile

#### THE EXPANDING WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT-EMPOWERED CHURCH

- [Paul's First Missionary Journey](#) - Acts 13:4-14:28
- [Paul's Second Missionary Journey](#) - Acts 15:36-18:32
- [Paul's Third Missionary Journey](#) - Acts 18:23-21:26
- [See more Maps related to Acts](#)
- [A Spirit Filled Church](#) - Take a moment to read this article which uses Scripture to describe "A Spirit Filled Church"
- [Our Anointing - The Holy Spirit](#)
- [Praying in the Spirit](#)
- [Spirit-Filled Believers Are Like Artesian Wells](#)

JESUS' WITNESS OUR EXAMPLE - **Spurgeon's devotional** "And ye shall be witnesses unto me." In order to learn how to discharge your duty as a **witness for Christ**, look at His example. He is always witnessing: by the well of Samaria, or in the Temple of Jerusalem: by the lake of Gennesaret, or on the mountain's brow. He is witnessing night and day; His mighty prayers are as vocal to God as His daily services. He witnesses under all circumstances; Scribes and Pharisees cannot shut His mouth; even before Pilate He witnesses a good confession. He witnesses so clearly, and distinctly that there is no mistake in Him. Christian, make your life a clear testimony. Be you as the brook wherein you may see every stone at the bottom-not as the muddy creek, of which you

only see the surface-but clear and transparent, so that your heart's love to God and man may be visible to all. You need not say, "I am true." Be true. Boast not of integrity, but be upright. **So shall your testimony be such that men cannot help seeing it.** Never, for fear of feeble man, restrain your witness. Your lips have been warmed with a coal from off the altar; let them speak as like heaven-touched lips should do.

"In the morning sow thy seed,  
and in the evening withhold not thine hand."

Watch not the clouds, consult not the wind-in season and out of season witness for the Saviour, and if it shall come to pass that for Christ's sake and the Gospel's you shall endure suffering in any shape, shrink not, but rejoice in the honour thus conferred upon you, that you are counted worthy to suffer with your Lord; and joy also in this-that your sufferings, your losses, and persecutions shall make you a platform, from which the more vigorously and with greater power you shall witness for Christ Jesus. Study your great Exemplar, and be filled with his Spirit. Remember that you need much teaching, much upholding, much grace, and much humility, if your witnessing is to be to your Master's glory.

---

**Robert Morgan** summarizes Acts 1:8 -

Acts 1:8 is the key that unlocks the door of Acts and the gates of Christian history.

Acts 1:8 represents the last known words of Jesus during His earthly ministry. Verse 9 indicates these are the Lord's final words before being "taken up." Luke 24:50-53 says Jesus ascended to heaven while blessing His disciples, but His words of blessings aren't given. Acts 1:8 are His final words as they were recorded for us. Shouldn't His last command be our first concern?

Acts 1:8 represents the passing of the baton between the Son and the Spirit regarding the divine mission on earth. Jesus indicated in the upper room discourse (John 13-17) that in His physical body He would return to heaven. His presence here would be replaced, so to speak, by the Holy Spirit; and He told the disciples in Luke 24 to tarry in Jerusalem until the Spirit arrived. In Acts 2 we have this arrival, the unleashing of the Holy Spirit upon the church. The book of Acts (and all subsequent Christian history) is the story of what Jesus Christ is continuing to do (see v. 1) on earth through His Spirit working in His church.

Acts 1:8 provides the table of contents for the book of Acts. In reading through Acts, it becomes clear that chapters 1-7 describe the gospel's penetrating Jerusalem; chapters 8-12, Judea and Samaria; and chapters 13-18, the ends of the earth, exactly as outlined in Acts 1:8.

Acts 1:8 represents Christ's agenda for the duration of history till He returns. It's our personal mandate, and every day of our lives must be spent under its ambition and authority ([100 Bible Verses Everyone Should Know by Heart](#))

## **THE CHURCH'S GREATEST NEED:** **THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT** **Earnest Reisinger**

Let me state at the outset what I believe to be the church's greatest need, and I do so without fear of contradiction by any serious, discerning observer.

The greatest need and one of deepest importance is for the continual manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. I did not say theological theory about the Holy Spirit, or just intellectual understanding -- I said, the power of the Holy Spirit; that has to do with **experience** not **words**. When we begin thinking and studying what the Bible has to say about the Holy Spirit and the believer, we are immediately into experimental awareness. I am talking about that which makes men aware of and sure of the reality of Jesus--the Living Christ.

Many preachers have little or nothing to say about experimental awareness of God. Not much is heard in our churches about the anointing through which men are made sure of the reality of Jesus as proclaimed by the apostles. 1Jn 2:20,27 is what I am talking about: "But you have an anointing from the Holy One...But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you."

**THE SOURCE OF ALL  
SPIRITUAL LIFE...**



The Holy Spirit is a live subject on the contemporary scene, and many of the **qualified** people are not saying enough about Him. And some **unqualified** people are often saying too much and often saying many inaccurate things which sometimes leads to fanaticism and hypocrisy. There are few subjects more important to the Christian and the Christian minister because the Holy Spirit is the source of all spiritual life, all spiritual worship, all spiritual ordinances, all spiritual witnessing and all spiritual service; He is also the "Divine Agent of Evangelism."

The Holy Spirit is to the life of the Christian what the Creator is to the world. Without God the Creator the world would not exist and without His continuing, sustaining, and preserving work the world would crash out of existence. So likewise, without the Holy Spirit there would be no Christians in the world and without His continual sanctifying influence the Christian would know no spiritual growth or power.

The churches of the reformation gave much emphasis to the work of the Holy Spirit. The reformers stressed that what is necessary for correct interpretation of the Bible is not the church, but rather the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit on man's mind.

**Spurgeon** said, "One of the most effectual ways for a church to revive herself is to preach much about the Holy Spirit; after all He is the very breath of the church. And when a church, a minister or a Christian finds that it is winter time in his soul they must turn to the Holy Spirit and cry, "Quicken Thou me in the Way."

May that be our cry these days of the great need for reality in our lives and the life of the church.

**Luther** and **Calvin** set forth with clarity that it is the Holy Spirit that is necessary in applying the sacrifice of Christ in our lives--not the mass but the Spirit.

### **FILLING OF THE SPIRIT OVER AND OVER AGAIN...**

How many churches are seeking: The power of the Spirit. The wisdom of the Spirit. The grace of the Spirit. The love of the Spirit. To pray in the Spirit? I am not talking about some second experience subsequent to conversion. I am talking about seeking to experience the filling of the Spirit over and over and over again for Gospel purposes.

In Romans 15:13,19 the great apostle shows the absolute necessity of the work of the Spirit for the internal growth of the church and for all the outside work of gathering God's elect from the world. In Ro 15:13 he attributes the power to be filled with joy and peace and abound in hope to the Holy Spirit.

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (NKJV).

In Ro 15:19 he shows the necessity of the Holy Spirit for outside Gospel work:

"in mighty signs and wonders by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" (NKJV).

You see, my dear reader, that first of all, to keep the church happy and holy within herself there must be a manifestation of the power of the Spirit. Secondly, in order for the church to invade the territories of the enemy and conquer sinners for Christ she must be clothed with the same mighty power. And let me underscore one thing, that is, the power of the church for her external work will be proportionate with the power which dwells within herself.

What I am saying is this: gauge the power of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers and you may fairly judge their influence on unbelievers. Let the church be illuminated by the Holy Spirit and she will be sure to reflect light and power to the unbelieving world. Why?? Because we, ourselves, must first drink of the living water before the rivers of living water will flow to the unconverted. (Jn 7:37, 38, 39) We cannot distribute loaves and fishes out of an empty basket.

Oh, the absolute necessity  
of the power of the Holy Spirit!

When we were baptized we were baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. When we pronounce couples "man and wife" we do so in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. When we affirm our faith in the creed, we say that we believe in God the Father, and in God the Son and in God the Holy Ghost. Yes, and the last words pronounced over our coffin before the mourners turn from our grave and the cold earth goes over our dead body, the last words to the mourners will be, "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you."

When we think of the incarnation we immediately think of the virgin Mary and how the Holy Ghost came upon her and the power of the Highest overshadowed her (Luke 1:35). When we consider the earthly ministry of our Lord we remember before that ministry

began the Spirit "descended from heaven like a dove and abode upon him." The Bible says that God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost; again, that the Father gave Him the Spirit above measure and that He was "full of the Holy Spirit" (John 1:32; Acts 10:38; John 3:34; Luke 4:1). When the Scripture takes us to the Cross, where He suffered vicariously, we learn in Heb 9:14 that it was "through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God. " When we think of the keystone of Christian truth, the seal and topstone of all His work (the resurrection), the Scripture again underscores the absolute necessity of the work of the Spirit. It is written that "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." When we view His departure from this world and the tremendous pain and sorrow that filled His disciples--how did He comfort that little orphan family? Well, it was with that gracious promise that He gave to them the night before He died: "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth." And when we think of His final mandate to the apostles to preach the gospel to all the world we again see the necessary place of the Holy Spirit. Hear His own words to them. "Wait for the promise of the Father." They were unfit to go forth with His message until they were "filled with the Holy Ghost." And we too are unfit.

What do you think of the whole dispensation under which we Christians live? You know we are privileged far above the Jews in that we are told in 2Cor 3:8 that we live under the "ministration of the Spirit."

### **Why do I say this is the need of the hour?**

1. Without the Spirit there will be no conviction.
2. Without the Spirit there will be no conversions.
3. Without the Spirit there will be no Spiritual growth.
4. Without the Spirit all preaching and witnessing is in vain.
5. Even the preaching of our Lord did not produce one convert apart from this life-giving power, though He Himself had the Spirit without measure.

The Bible says, "You shall receive power." When? When the Holy Spirit shall come upon you." (Acts 1:8) When we think of evangelism we think of the Holy Spirit promised in Acts 1:8. Immediately our minds run to two things. First, to Pentecost where 3000 souls were evangelized, and secondly, to the effectual call that (1) enlightened their minds, (2) convicted, and convinced their consciences, and (3) renewed their wills. Well, my dear reader, I trust that you can understand my assertion that the greatest need in the church today is a manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost was a Holy Spirit event--an evangelistic event. When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost God laid the whole world in the lap of the church as her responsibility to witness. Just think what the Holy Spirit produced at Pentecost.

### **What Did The Holy Spirit Produce at Pentecost?**

I hear someone saying, "tongues." Well, we will see that tongues is the least thing it produced--almost insignificant by comparison.

**First, the Holy Spirit at Pentecost produced powerful, evangelistic preaching.** See it immediately in Acts 2:14-36. This preaching was not only powerful but it was relevant; it made them ask the right questions. One of the things that serious preachers must always be concerned about is that their preaching be relevant. There is much preaching which is answering questions that no one is asking. That is like scratching where it doesn't itch.

One of the fundamental problems of our generation, both in the world and in the church, is that people are not asking the right questions. They are not itching in the right place. Well, what is the answer to that problem? The answer is Spirit-breathed, Christ-centered, Bible preaching in the power and unction of the Holy Spirit. Only the Spirit can bring conviction. The New Testament and the history of revival clearly testify to that fact.

John 16:8: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

Under the powerful Holy Ghost preaching there is never any problem with people itching in the wrong places, and they will be asking the right questions (Acts 2:37). "What must I do to be saved?" Did any one ever ask a more important question? N.B. (Note well) They did not ask any questions about tongues or anything about the phenomena. They asked a much more important question--verse 37: "Men and brethren what must we do?"

Some think of Pentecost as producing tongues. It did that, but tongues did not produce converts. No. It was the powerful preaching induced by the Holy Spirit that made people itch in the right place, ask the right questions, and find the right answers. This powerful preaching produced converts, thousands of them. If you never understand tongues it will not make one bit of difference. But if you never experience Spirit-anointed preaching it makes all the difference in the world--yes, the difference between life and death, heaven and hell.

**The second thing the Holy Spirit produced at Pentecost was an "Apostolic Church."** See Acts 2:42-47. The Holy Spirit is not just an "Evangelist" drawing people to Christ. The Holy Spirit is also a "Church Planter" and a "Church Builder." The Holy Spirit draws people into the fellowship of the church. The Holy Spirit creates the communion of obedient, teachable, worshiping, and witnessing Christians. Christians who are learning to love God, love God's people, and God's Church.

What is an Apostolic church? It is a church experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit. This is apparent by what is revealed in Acts 2:42-47. The converts were steadfast. "They continued steadfastly." That is, they were not a church that was carried away with every novelty and every new gimmick or method of evangelism. An apostolic church knows what it believes and why it believes what it believes.

### **MARKS OF AN APOSTOLIC CHURCH**

There are four areas or four distinct marks of an apostolic church set forth in these verses.

1. (Acts 2:42) - They were continually devoting themselves to Apostolic teaching. Perhaps this is the primary mark. A real church will be submitting to apostolic truth. They will be interested in what the Bible says, what it means and how it applies to faith and practice.

2. (Acts 2:42) - They were distinguished by God-honoring worship --"Breaking of bread, prayer and praise." I wish all ministers and church officers were as much concerned about the power of the Holy Spirit in our worship services as they are about a lot of minute details. There would be much more peace and true worship and far less pharisaic quibbling about secondary matters. All the forms and ceremonies--even baptism and the Lord's Supper--though properly managed, will be empty and unedifying, and they will bring no glory to God or good to His people without the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that the first concern in the official order of divine worship is the Holy Spirit. The hymn writer was correct when he wrote "All is vain unless the Holy One come down."

No ordinance has any effective spiritual power except the Spirit gives it. No Christian's heart is ever in the proper frame to worship without the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the worship of God issues in joy and gladness. They were distinguished by God-honoring worship.

3. (Acts 2:44, 45) - They were marked by Christ-like love and unity. They did not forsake the assembling of themselves together.

4. (Acts 2:47) - They not only applied themselves to sound doctrine, and engaged in true worship, and were united by Christ-like love, but fourthly, they were increased by God-centered evangelism. The Lord added to the church. That is God-centered evangelism.

Did they just sit under apostolic teaching, worship and pray, and say the Lord saves? No, there was something else going on daily. Cf.

Acts 2:47. Every day or day by day the Lord added because every day...from house to house they kept teaching and preaching about Jesus.

Acts 5:42 (NKJV): "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ." This was God-centered, Holy Ghost, God-honoring evangelism.

The Father has sent us the Comforter that He may dwell in us till the coming of the Lord. The Holy Ghost has never returned, for He came in accordance with the Saviour's prayer and the Saviour's promise, to abide with us forever. The gift of the Comforter was not temporary, and the display of His power was not to be once seen and never again.

The Holy Ghost is here and we ought to expect His divine working among us; and if He does not so work we should search ourselves to see what it is that hinders, and whether there may not be somewhat in ourselves which vexes Him, so that He restrains His sacred energy, and does not work among us as He did before.

Spurgeon's Hymn says it well:

The Holy Ghost is here, where saints in prayer agree,  
As Jesus' parting Gift is near each pleading company.  
Not far away is He to be by prayer brought nigh,  
But here in present majesty, as in His courts on high.  
He dwells within our soul, an ever welcome guest;  
He reigns with absolute control, as monarch in the breast.

Obedient to Thy will, we wait to feel Thy power  
O Lord of life, our hopes fulfill, and bless this hallowed hour.

What we long for supremely is to be empowered by the Holy Spirit--to know the fulness of the Spirit. Organization is helpful, but one thing is essential and that is the power of the Spirit. With the fullness of the Spirit...

1. Our organization will be filled with power, peace and prosperity.
2. Our orthodoxy will pulsate with love. There will be no legalism or Pharisaism. Our liberty will serve the interests of truth and godliness, not self-indulgence.
3. A fuller tide of the Spirit means spiritual discernment, deeper insight into the Scriptures.
4. The church will be "glorious in holiness," for wherever the Spirit of God dwells He is as the refiner's fire.
5. Peace, harmony, and unity will be insured. Fidelity to truth will carry no pride or bitterness.
6. The church will have a real missionary vision.
7. With the fulness of the Spirit the church will not use carnal and unworthy methods in worship or witness.

Whatever means you use to get people into the church is precisely what you must use to keep them. If you get them with a religious circus then you must keep the circus going--keep up the entertainment. If you get them with biblical preaching and teaching, then that will keep them and you will not need the entertainment.

The church will have an attractive power. When the fruit of the Spirit abounds men will be drawn as bees to the apple blossom. Preaching will be "in the demonstration of the Spirit and power."

But I think I hear someone say, "O, that was an apostolic promise, you are talking about apostolic times." No, my friend, I am speaking to you about something that not only happened in the far distant past, I am speaking about a promise that is far-reaching, yes, the promise of the Spirit is a far-reaching promise.

Let me give you just two verses to establish that fact.

Acts 2:38,39 (NKJV): "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'"

Please note the words "to all who are afar off." If those words are not sufficient to convince you then underscore the rest of the words in the passage, "as many as the Lord our God will call." Oh, I am glad for this "far-reaching promise."

Do you realize that all that has been done by God the Father and all that has been done by God the Son will not accomplish one thing unless the Spirit makes them effectual? Surely this is the greatest need in the church. No acceptable action of the Christian life can be performed without the Holy Spirit.

#### How Shall We Hope to Obtain The Power or Fullness of the Spirit?

The Bible makes two things very, very clear in connection with fullness and power of the Spirit.

**First**, there is some relationship between the fullness and power of the Spirit and prayer. Two passages underscore this statement.

Luke 11:13 (NKJV): "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Acts 4:31 (NKJV): "And when they had prayed (and not before) the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods but through men. He does not come on machinery but on men. He does not anoint plans but men. It is not great talent nor great learning that God needs but men great in holiness, great in faith, great in love, great in fidelity, great for God. These men can mold a generation for God.

**Secondly**, the Bible also teaches that there is some relationship to the power of the Spirit and obedience.

Acts 5:32 (NKJV): "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him. "

Our Lord condemned the religious crowd in His day on two counts (Mt. 22:29). He said to them, "You do err [or you are mistaken], not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God." They lacked knowledge and power. When the disciples could not heal the man in the gospels it was not a lack of knowledge but power. We do not lack knowledge--we lack power.

Knowledge comes by studying.  
Power comes by prayer and fasting.

It is possible to know the plan (knowledge) and not know the power. You will not get power by attending meetings even though you may get the principle for receiving the power by the meeting; you will get the power by waiting on God. You may get the inspiration to seek the power in the meeting, but the power itself comes by waiting, not going.

Yes, it is true, the wind blows where it will. And there certainly is a sense in which the Spirit is sovereign to blow when, where and how He will. But the supernatural does have some laws just as the natural world does:

1. Everything that grieves the Spirit must be put away. To use biblical language "all malice and all guile and all hypocrisies and all unbelief, worldly mindedness, pride" --everything opposed to the simplicity, the charity and purity of Christ.

2. We will not have the power of the Spirit without importunate earnest prayer (Acts 1:14 preceded Acts 2)--prayer that has in it some intensity of desire; the kind of prayer expressed in Luke 11:9-13 (NKJV)

"And I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

This kind of prayer links together the whole communion of the faithful and knows no stopping till the answer comes. We cannot stop at mere theological consideration of the Holy Spirit. Why? Because sound theology without the Spirit will make you dry up. The Spirit without sound theology will make you blow up. But with both sound theology and the Spirit you will grow up.

My whole motive and effort in this article is to create within us a genuine desire for the power of the Spirit in our ministry and in our places of service.

The old Latin hymn of the 10th century expressed it well. May it be the desire of our hearts. ([The Church's Greatest Need](#))

Come, O Creator Spirit blest,  
And in our hearts take up thy rest;  
Spirit of grace, with heavenly aid  
Come to the souls whom thou hast made.

Thou art the Comforter, we cry,  
Sent to the earth from God Most High,  
Fountain of life and Fire of love,  
And our anointing from above.

Make our dull minds with rapture glow,  
Let human hearts with love o'erflow;  
And, when our feeble flesh would fail  
May shine immortal strength prevail.

Show us the Father, Holy One,  
Help us to know the Eternal Son;  
Spirit Divine, for evermore  
Thee will we trust and thee adore.

## Related Resources

- [A Spirit Filled Church](#)
  - [The Holy Spirit-Walking Like Jesus Walked!](#)
-



## FOLLOWING JESUS' EXAMPLE

Click to Enlarge

In the diagram above notice that when **Jesus ascended**, the **Spirit descended**. However, there is more to the story as Paul Harvey used to say! As will be explained below, the Gospels teach us that Jesus, fully God, but also fully Man, witnessed in the power of the Holy Spirit and in so doing left His followers the perfect example to follow as His witnesses to the world!

### (1) IMITATION OF JESUS

The epistles repeatedly call for believers to imitate the life of Jesus.

(a) **Peter** reminds us (in context of discussing His suffering) "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an **example** for you **to follow in His steps** (1 Peter 2:21-+)

(b) **John** writes that "the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to **walk** (conduct himself) **in the same manner as He walked**. (1John 2:6) John's exhortation begs the question "How did Jesus conduct Himself during His ministry on earth?" And specifically what was the source of His power for this walk? The answer will be addressed in [point #2](#) below.

(c) **Paul** issued the command to be imitators of Jesus twice in one letter to the Corinthian church "I exhort you therefore, **be** (present imperative = command to continually be) **imitators** of me. (1Cor 4:16). Later he wrote" **Be** (present imperative = command to continually be) **imitators** of me, **just as I also am of Christ**. (1Cor 11:1-+) And so, beloved, we must ask the question -- "What is Jesus' example which Paul imitated and we too are commanded (enabled by the Spirit) to imitate?"

As an aside it is important to understand that every imperative or command spoken to believers in the New Testament is a call for us to renounce our dependence on self (our fleshly ability to obey and carry out the command) and to depend on the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit, Who gives us both the desire (my flesh left to itself does not want to obey God) and the power (my flesh does not have the supernatural power to obey God). (See Php 2:13NLT-+). And yet in the mysterious working of God, we must make a conscious, volitional decision to work out our salvation in fear and trembling. (Php 2:12-+), a "process" I like to refer to as "Sacred Synergism." (a term adapted from Jerry Bridges' book I highly recommend entitled [The Bookends of the Christian Life](#).)

### (2) ANOINTED BY THE SPIRIT

**Kistemaker** writes "We see a distinct parallel between Jesus and his disciples when they are about to begin their respective ministries. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended upon him and strengthened him to oppose the power of Satan (see Mt. 3:16). Before the apostles are able to assume the tremendous responsibility of building the church of Jesus Christ and to conquer the strongholds of Satan, they receive the power of the Holy Spirit. In the upper room on Easter Sunday, Jesus breathed on the apostles and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). But immediately before this he told them, "As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you" (Jn 20:21).

The Gospel accounts explain **Jesus' "example"** describing His Source of power for ministry...

Matthew 3:16-17, 4:1 (cp Mk 1:10, Lk 3:22, Jn 1:32, 33, 34) And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the **Spirit of God** descending as a dove, and **coming upon Him** (come = *erchomai* + upon = *epi*. Compare "*comes upon*" = *eperchomai* here in Acts 1:8),17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." Then Jesus was **led up by the Spirit** into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

**Comment:** "**Led by**" is **passive voice** meaning just what it says. Jesus submitted His will to the will of the Spirit, to obey as the Spirit led Him. And so at the inception of His 3 year ministry we begin to see Jesus' example and the "secret" of His power. Beloved, are you learning to yield to the leading of the Holy Spirit? Do you desire the same power in which Jesus ministered? Do you believe Jesus' promise to you as one of His disciples?...

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also and greater works than these shall he do because I go to the Father. (John 14:12)

**What did Jesus mean? The ESV Study Bible** has this excellent answer... “Greater works” will be possible because of the power of the Holy Spirit Who would be sent after Jesus goes to the Father (John 16:7; also John 7:39; 14:16, 26). These “greater works” include evangelism, teaching, and deeds of mercy and compassion—in short, the entire ministry of the **Church** to the entire world, **beginning from Pentecost** (Acts 2:1-2, 3-4). (E.g., on the day of Pentecost alone, more believers were added to Jesus’ followers than during his entire earthly ministry up to that time; cf. Acts 2:41.) These works are “greater” not because they are more amazing miracles but because they will be greater in their worldwide scope and will result in the transformation of individual lives and of whole cultures and societies.

**John MacArthur** adds: The greater works to which Jesus referred were not greater in power than those He performed, but greater in extent. The disciples would indeed perform miraculous works, as Jesus had (cf. Acts 5:12–16; Heb. 2:3–4). But those physical miracles were not primarily what Jesus had in mind, since the apostles did not do more powerful miracles than He had. When the Lord spoke of His followers performing greater works, He was referring to the extent of the spiritual miracle of salvation. Jesus never preached outside of Palestine, yet His followers would spread the gospel throughout the world. Jesus had only a limited outreach to Gentiles (cf. Mark 7:26ff.), but the disciples (particularly Peter and later Paul) would reach the Gentile world with the gospel. The number of believers in Christ would also grow far beyond the hundreds (Acts 1:15; 1 Cor. 15:6) that were numbered during His lifetime. The power to perform those greater works would only be available because Jesus was going to the Father. It was only then that He would send the Holy Spirit (John 7:39; cf. John 14:16–17, 26; 15:26; 16:13; Acts 1:5) to indwell believers (Ro. 8:9–11) and empower them for ministry (Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 12:4–11; cf. Eph. 3:20). Christ’s promise to send the Holy Spirit offered further comfort to the disciples. Though Jesus would no longer be visibly present with them, the Spirit would provide them with all the power they needed to extend the work He had begun (cf. Acts 1:8). ([MacArthur, J: John 12-21. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

**Are believers anointed by the Spirit?** The answer is yes. John writes...

But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know...<sup>27</sup> As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him. (1 Jn 2:20+, 1 Jn 2:27+)

**John Piper** explains **anointing** - Acts 10:38 says that Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit. And 1 John 4:13 says that God has given us of his Spirit. So the anointing referred to in 1Jn 2:20 (**see note**) and 1Jn 2:27 is probably the pouring of the Holy Spirit into our hearts when we are born again. So we can go back and rephrase 1Jn 2:20 like this: “You have the Holy Spirit from God in you and so you know the truth.” And 1Jn 2:27 would go like this: “The Holy Spirit which you received from God abides in you and so you have no need that any one should teach you. That is, you don’t need these progressive prophets who claim to add new information about Christ beyond the truth you heard at the beginning.” What is plain from these two verses is that without the Holy Spirit we would not know the truth. Knowing the truth about Christ is a gift of the Holy Spirit. ([1 John 2:18-27 Let What You Heard Abide in You](#))

## Related Resrouce

- [Our Anointing - The Holy Spirit](#)

## (2) JESUS' PATTERN - FILLED WITH & EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT

If we are to imitate Jesus by following His example, we need to understand how Jesus carried out His ministry as the God-Man. The short answer is that Jesus while of course fully God, choose to function as fully Man in dependence on the Holy Spirit. How else could He have given us an example to follow? Had He functioned on earth in the power He had in Himself as God, men could not imitate that example for we are not God. But we do have God the Spirit within us as believers and in dependence on Him, we can imitate Jesus' example as discussed below.

**Luke** shows us that Jesus as fully God and fully Man, laid aside His divine prerogatives, and filled with the Spirit chose to surrender to the Holy Spirit's leading...

And Jesus, **full of the Holy Spirit**, returned from the Jordan and was **led about by the Spirit** in the

wilderness." (Luke 4:1-+)

Luke's version parallels Mt 4:1 but adds that Jesus was filled with the Spirit, the very thing Paul commands in Ephesians writing that believers are "not to be drunk with wine for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph 5:18-+). What does this mean to be filled with the Spirit? What happens when one is filled with alcohol? It controls what they say, how they walk, what they do, etc. When someone is filled with rage as were those in the synagogue in Luke 4:28-+, it controls their actions (see Lk 6:11-+). In short, what fills you, controls you. If the Spirit fills you, He controls you. Is this a bit mysterious? It is to me, but it is clearly the pattern of powerful ministry laid out in the Gospels, in Acts and in the Epistles. Observe and meditate on the following passages in Acts - Acts 2:4, Acts 4:8 (Observe how Peter spoke prior to the filling with the power of the Spirit! - Mt 26:69-70, 71, 72, 73, 74-75), Acts 4:31 (Observe especially what they spoke and how they spoke! Do you see a pattern?), Acts 9:17 (How was Paul able to be such a powerful and effective witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ?), Acts 13:9, Acts 13:52

As **Adrian Rogers** says

The Holy Spirit is to a Christian — what instinct is to an animal.

The Holy Spirit leads you — but He never drives you.

I love the way the great Puritan writer **John Bunyan** described filling with the Spirit "Seamen cannot create the wind, but they can hoist their sails to welcome it; neither can we create the breath of the Spirit, but are we to miss it when it comes through failure to keep our sails unfurled?" May God grant us grace to keep our "sails unfurled!" Amen

Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;  
Wean it from earth; through all its pulses move;  
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art,  
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.

-George Croly

**Luke** explains how Jesus lived supernaturally as a Man.

(After Jesus' temptation by the devil) And Jesus returned to Galilee **in the power (dunamis) of the Spirit**; and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. (Luke 4:14-+)

**Luke** goes on to explain the power on Whom Jesus depended for effective ministry...

(After entering the synagogue on the Sabbath He read from Isaiah) **"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE DOWNTRODDEN, 19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."** (Luke 4:18-19-+)

In Acts **Luke** summarizes **Jesus'** ministry and the source of His power declaring

You yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with **the Holy Spirit** (see Mt 3:16-17 above) and with **power (dunamis)**, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for **God was with Him**. (Acts 10:37-38)

**Comment:** Observe that last phrase "God was with Him." Notice that it is introduced by a ("for"), which explains how Jesus was able to carry on ministry. This is a mystery to me, for Jesus could have chosen to minister in His own power, but He did not. He chose to empty Himself and become a bondservant of the Most High God and to leave you and I the perfect pattern for powerful ministry "for God was with Him." And how was He with Him? By His Spirit!

In summary from the preceding passages, it is clear that Jesus, although fully God, emptied Himself of His divine prerogatives (cp Php 2:6-7-+) and carried out His ministry in **the power of the Holy Spirit**, leaving us an example to follow His steps, an example to be imitated even as Paul imitated Jesus. To be sure, there are some supernatural events in Jesus' ministry that cannot be replicated (in my opinion) by believers (turning water to wine, feeding 5000, etc), but the basic premise holds that Jesus showed us that a perfect Man could carry out a supernatural ministry in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. And so here in Acts, at the beginning of the Church Age, Jesus is explaining to His apostles (and by way of application **to all believers**) that they cannot be **His witnesses** in their own strength but only in **the power of the Holy Spirit**

Do we in the modern church truly understand this simple but profound pattern for powerful proclamation of the Gospel? Dear reader, do you understand that you cannot carry out a supernatural ministry without the power of the Holy Spirit? While I may not agree with

everything that D. L. Moody says in his little book "[Secret Power](#)", I do wholeheartedly agree with the following statements ...

The fact is, we are leaky vessels, and we have to keep right under the fountain all the time to keep full of Christ (**Ed:** "the Spirit of Christ" Ro 8:9+), and so have a **fresh supply** (**Ed:** "Of the power of the Spirit for ministry"). I believe this is a mistake a great many of us are making; we are trying to do God's work with the grace God gave us ten years ago. We say, if it is necessary, we will go on with the same grace (**Ed:** Contrast Paul's example - observe Paul's responsibility and God's provision [cp Sacred Synergism]-1Cor 15:10+)....

...When we have the Spirit resting upon us, we can **speak with authority and power**, and the Lord will bless our testimony and bless our work. I believe the reason why God makes use of so few in the Church, is because there is not in them the **power** that God can use. He is not going to use our ideas, but we must have the Word of God hid in our hearts (**Ed:** See Memorizing His Word and Memory Verses by Topic), and then, the Holy Spirit inflaming us, we will have the testimony which will be rich, and sweet, and fresh, and the Lord's Word will vindicate itself in blessed results. God wants to use us; God wants to make us channels of blessing; but we are in such a condition He does not use us. That is the trouble; there are so many men who have **no testimony for the Lord**; if they speak, they speak without saying anything, and if they pray, their prayer is powerless; they do not plead in prayer; their prayer is just a few set phrases that you have heard too often. Now what we want, is to be so **full of the Word**, (cp Col 3:16+) that the Spirit coming upon us shall bring to mind--bring to our remembrance--the words of the Lord Jesus (Jn 14:26)....

...When the Spirit of God is on us the world looks very empty; the world has a very small hold upon us (cp Col 3:1+, Col 3:2+, 2Cor 4:17+, 2Cor 4:18+, 1Pe 1:13+), and we begin to let go our hold of it. (**Ed:** Let it be so Lord!) When the Spirit of God is on us we will just let go the things of time and lay hold of things eternal. This is the Church's need to-day; we want the Spirit to come in mighty power, and consume all the vile dross there is in us. Oh! that the Spirit of fire may come down and burn everything in us that is contrary to God's blessed Word and Will. (**Amen!**) ([Secret Power](#))

## ILLUSTRATIONS RELATED TO ACTS 1:8

**Bill Crowder** gives us a pithy Illustration of Need for Power - The first winter that my wife Marlene and I were married was marked by severe blizzards. I can vividly remember one Sunday when we awoke to find that the electricity had been knocked out by an ice storm. Huddled around a battery-powered radio for news on that frigid Sunday, we heard a most unusual announcement. The announcer, before giving the list of church services canceled due to the ice storm, said, "**The following churches will be closed due to lack of power.**" What an interesting comment! I knew what he meant, but I was struck by what he said. The idea of churches closing due to lack of power conjures up some spiritual parallels that directly tie into Jesus' promise of the Spirit. Just prior to His ascension, Jesus told His men in [Acts 1:8](#), "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." He directly attached the coming of the Spirit to the empowering of believers. (Bill Crowder - RBC Ministry - Promise of the Spirit)

**Illustration** - No, this isn't a Seinfeld episode—it is real life. The U.S. Postal Service in a surprise audit discovered that some local managers temporarily stashed unprocessed mail in parked trailers so that the letters and packages so supervisors wouldn't notice it as delayed. Auditors found millions of pieces of undelivered mail, including 2.3 million bulk-business letters, some of which were delayed nine days, and 800,000 first-class letters, which had been held for three days. What should the penalty be when the people entrusted with the news fail to make the delivery? The world may not be expecting the delivery, but they are at home awaiting the message of the good news concerning God sending His Son. We must be faithful to deliver the message.

**What a Difference an Infusion of Power Makes!** - Wade C. Graber, a Baptist pastor, said that years ago he was in school, driving fifty-eight miles round trip every day for his classes. He was getting up early and going to bed late, and he was also employed on a part-time basis in a ministry. One morning, he said, during his time alone with God, his tired eyes read Ephesians 3:16. "The instant I finished reading this verse, I experienced an 'infusion.' It was electrical... I was immediately empowered, energized, and invigorated by the indwelling Spirit." Many years have passed since then, but Graber wrote, "I continue to quote Ephesians 3:16 on multiple occasions. The electric physical sensation is not always experienced, but the strengthening ministry of the Spirit still occurs in my times of need." ([Wade C. Graber, The Mission of the Holy Spirit](#), 2010)

Jesus said about the people of His day, "You are **mistaken** (Greek = planaō) because you do not know the Scriptures or the

power (Greek = **dunamis**) of God." (Mark 12:24) Are you **mistaken** dear child of God? Ignorance is not bliss when it comes to a true knowledge of the Holy Spirit.

---

**Rob Morgan** in his discussion of how "The Holy Spirit Works through Us" tells a story that literally changed the course of Billy Graham's ministry - ....In our Christian work and in our personal ministry, it is the Holy Spirit Who works through us. Jesus told the disciples in Acts 1:8: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses...." If you ever want to pursue an interesting personal Bible study, just read the book of Acts and underline or highlight every reference to the Holy Spirit. You could make a strong case that the book of the Acts of the Apostles ought to be called the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

---

## To The End

By Bill Crowder

You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. —Acts 1:8

It was my first day of class at the Moscow Bible Institute where I was teaching Russian pastors. I began by asking the students to give their names and where they served, but one student shocked me as he boldly declared, "Of all the pastors, I am the most faithful to the Great Commission!" I was taken aback momentarily until, smiling, he continued, "The Great Commission says we are to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. I pastor north of the Arctic Circle in a village nicknamed 'The End of the Earth!'" Everyone laughed and we continued with the session.

The words of that pastor, who ministered in the Yamal (which means "end of the world") Peninsula, carry great significance. In Jesus' final message to His disciples, He said, "You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Every corner of our world, no matter how remote, must be touched by the message of the cross. The Savior died for the world—and that includes people both near and far.

Each of us has the opportunity to take the gospel to people in our "end of the earth." No matter where you are, you can tell someone about the love of Christ. Who can you tell today? ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

People can't believe in Jesus  
If the gospel they don't hear,  
So we must proclaim its message  
To the world—both far and near. —Sper

Any place can be the right place to witness for Christ.

---

## Acts 1:1-11

### To Be Continued

By David C. McCasland

You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. —Acts 1:8

The fifth book of the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles, records the beginnings of the Christian church under the leadership of the people Jesus had appointed. Some scholars have suggested that this book could also be called the Acts of the Holy Spirit, because the Spirit's power supplied courage for the apostles in the face of every hardship.

Just before Jesus was taken up into heaven, He told the ones He had chosen: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). With those words, one chapter in the story of God's work on earth ended, and a new one began. We are a part of that ongoing story.

The book of Acts describes the faithful witness of Peter, John, Barnabas, Paul, Dorcas, Lydia, and many others during the early days of the church. These ordinary people depended on God to give them strength as they spread His Word and demonstrated His love.

That story continues through us. As we trust God and obey His direction to make Jesus known, He writes through us new pages in His story of redemption. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Gracious Spirit, use my words to help and heal.



Use my actions, bold and meek, to speak for You.

May You be pleased to reveal

Your life to others through mine.

People know true faith stories when they see them.

---

**THE SAME GOSPEL FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE** - In 1941, the great Welsh preacher, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, spoke to a large audience of students at an Anglican church in Oxford. He preached to them as he would have preached anywhere else. After the meeting, it was announced that if anyone had questions, they could come to a room at the back of the church and ask Dr. Lloyd-Jones. He expected just a few, but the room was packed. A bright young student immediately got up and phrased his question with all the grace and polish of a union debater. He complimented the preacher, but then said that he had one great difficulty. He didn't see but how the sermon might not equally have been delivered to a congregation of farm laborers. The intellectual crowd roared with laughter. Lloyd-Jones replied that he could not see the difficulty, in that he regarded undergraduates and indeed graduates of Oxford University as just ordinary, common human sinners like everybody else, and that they had the same needs as farm laborers or anyone else. Thus he had preached quite deliberately just as he had done! He also drew a laugh and from then on had the full attention of everyone there. He goes on to say, "There is no greater fallacy than to think that you need a gospel for special types of people" (Iain Murray, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones [Banner of Truth], 2:pp. 76-77).

---

In the book, [The Leadership Secrets of Billy Graham](#), Harold Myra and Marshall Shelly said that when Billy Graham was a young man he accepted every speaking engagement that came his way, and he was full of passion as he preached the Gospel and invited people to receive Christ as their Savior. But there was still something missing, and he knew that his personal charisma was not enough to fulfill the calling of God on his life. During a preaching mission to the British Isles, he met a young Welsh evangelist named [Stephen Olford](#) who had the spiritual qualities that Billy longed to have. (Ed note: Graham called him "the man who most influenced my ministry.") One day Billy listened as Olford preached on the subject of being filled with the Holy Spirit. "You've spoken of something that I don't have," said Billy. "I want the fullness of the Holy spirit in my life, too." Olford agreed to set two days aside during Billy's campaign. During the day the two men talked and at night they paused long enough for Billy to preach. In a small stone hotel, Olford led Billy step by step through the Bible verses on the power of the Holy Spirit. The first night when Billy preached, Olford thought that his sermon was ordinary and not particularly effective. The next day Olford continued the instruction, telling Billy that he must be broken like the apostle Paul, letting God turn him inside out. Olford shared his own testimony, and Billy's eyes filled with tears. "Stephen, I see it," he said, "That's what I want. That's what I need in my life." They knelt, and Billy poured out his heart in a prayer of total dedication to the Lord. And finally he said, "My heart is so flooded with the Holy Spirit! I have it! (Ed: Better "I have Him") I'm filled. **This is a turning point in my life.**" The two men went on to the meeting where Billy was to preach and for reasons known only to God, the place which was only moderately filled the night before was packed to the door. **When Billy gave the invitation, practically the entire crowd rushed forward. And it was, indeed, a turning point in his ministry.** Now we're obviously not all evangelists like that, but **we all need the power and the anointing of the Holy Spirit** and the work that we do for Christ is nothing except the work that Jesus Christ Himself is doing through us. My grandfather ran a waterwheel beside a small creek in Roan Mountain, Tennessee. He ground corn into cornmeal for his own family and for others. The water hit the wheel, and that turned the mechanism that did the work. It would have been very difficult work if my grandfather had tried to turn that wheel in his own power. But it was the power of the perpetually flowing water that turned the wheel and produced the results. You say, how do I experience the fullness and the power of the Holy Spirit? (1) Confess and turn from all of your sins, including those sins that so easily beset you. (2) Open every part of your life to Him in full yieldedness and surrender. (3) Pray and ask God for His fullness. (4) Trust Him to do as He has promise

There's an old hymn that puts this in the form of a prayer:

[Breathe on me, Breath of God](#),

Fill me with life anew,

That I may love what Thou dost love,

And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,

Until my heart is pure,

Until with thee I will Thy will

To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
Till I am wholly Thine.  
Till all this earthly part of me  
Glows with Thy fire divine

---

**John Piper** - There are about 200 million non-churched people in America, making America one of the four largest 'unchurched' nations in the world." --John Piper, in a sermon titled "I will build My church." While we need to keep looking to the spiritual needs of the world, missions and evangelism start right where we live. Jesus said we are to be his witnesses "both" at home and abroad. (see Acts 1:8)

---

What began in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost was not tied to geography, peace, or prosperity. It was the Spirit in them fulfilling Jesus' promise in Acts 1:8, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." When God allows difficult circumstances in our lives—a lost job, a demanding family need, a relocation to another city, state, or country—can we see His hand and sense His power? May we be like those early Christians, accepting the Lord's leading and joyfully proclaiming His Word wherever we are. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Holy Spirit gives us power  
To witness far and wide,  
Equipping us to do God's work  
And changing us inside.  
—Sper

The power that compels us  
comes from the Spirit who indwells us.

---

## **Acts 1:8 [Business Card](#)**

**By C. P. Hia**

1 Timothy 1:1,12-17

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ ... —1 Timothy 1:1

In some cultures, the title below your name on your business card is very important. It identifies your rank. The way you are treated depends on your title as compared with others around you.

If Paul had a business card, it would have identified him as an "apostle"

(1 Tim. 1:1), meaning "sent one." He used this title not out of pride but out of wonder. He didn't earn that position; it was "by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ." In other words, his was not a human but a divine appointment.

Paul had formerly been a "blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man" (v.13). He said that he considered himself to be the "chief" of sinners (v.15). But because of God's mercy, he was now an apostle, one to whom "the King eternal" (v.17) had committed the glorious gospel and whom He had sent out to share that gospel.

What is more amazing is that like the apostle Paul we are all sent out by the King of kings to the world (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). Let's recognize with humility that we don't deserve such a commission either. It is our privilege to represent Him and His eternal truth in word and in deed each day to all around us. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Let us go forth, as called of God,  
Redeemed by Jesus' precious blood;  
His love to show, His life to live,  
His message speak, His mercy give.  
—Whittle

God gave you a message to share. Don't keep it to yourself!

---

**[Change The World!](#)** - John, do you want to spend the rest of your life selling sugared water, or do you want a chance to change the

world?"

That was the challenge Steve Jobs issued in 1983 to John Sculley, then president of Pepsi-Cola. Mr. Jobs was the creative genius behind Apple Computer. He knew that the soft-drink executive could help Apple make its mark on the computer world. Sculley accepted the bold challenge.

Jesus issued a challenge to three fishermen as they tended their nets. He commanded, "Follow Me!" (Mk. 1:17). They did, and with a handful of other ordinary men they changed the world. On the Day of Pentecost the promised Holy Spirit began a new work through them, and 3,000 were saved (Acts 2). Eventually critics would charge that they had turned the world "upside down" (Acts 17:6).

Our world is wrong-side up and right-side down, living by principles opposed to our Lord's teachings. We can either follow the world's dead-end philosophies, or we can accept Jesus' challenge to bring change to the world.

Today let's serve God by praying, giving, and witnessing in our small corner. One day the King of kings will return and transform the whole world! — by Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Christ calls to us, "Come follow Me,  
And don't look back to yesterday;  
Fresh grace I'll give to change your world,  
My joy you'll find as You obey."  
—DJD

A disciple is known not for what he gives up, but for what he takes up.

---

## **Fence-Breaking**

Read: Acts 8:1-8

You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria. —Acts 1:8

It was a significant statement by Luke when he wrote that the church was "scattered throughout . . . Samaria" (Acts 8:1). Prior to this time, the Christians lived in the familiar surroundings of Jerusalem—home to the memories of Pentecost and the explosive expansion of the church. The early Christians would have been content to stay there forever. But persecution scattered them into a new territory—Samaria.

Samaria was beyond their comfort zone. They saw it as a vile place that decent Jews avoided. Old Testament prophets denounced Samaria, and Nehemiah knew enough about the Samaritans' character not to let them help with the building of the temple (Neh. 2:19-20). Because of the longstanding social and religious barriers between Jews and Samaritans, the early Christians were able to imagine God as a fence-keeper.

But God tore down the fences with Samaria. He hates anything that keeps the gospel from people. Jesus had ordered His followers to be witnesses in Samaria (Acts 1:8), but it took the threat of death to get the young church to take Christ's fence-breaking commission seriously.

What fences are keeping you from sharing your faith? Do you need to move beyond your comfort zone? [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Breaking down the walls and fences  
Keeping us apart  
Happens every time the gospel  
Penetrates a heart.  
—Sper

God has left us in the world to be witnesses to the world.

By Haddon W. Robinson

---

**Have We Learned?** - What happens when we keep to ourselves something that, if shared with others, would enrich their lives? We not only fail to increase their happiness, but we rob ourselves of the joy that generosity brings.

Luigi Tarisio, who loved violins passionately, never learned that lesson. He spent his limited income buying the finest instruments he could find. He owned 246 exquisite violins, which were crammed into every corner of his otherwise barren little house. And they were never played! His obsession prevented those instruments from bringing pleasure and inspiration to other music lovers.

Instead of following Luigi's example, we need to be motivated by the admonition of Proverbs 3:27 to keep ourselves free from the guilt of withholding good. Even more, we should be motivated by grateful obedience to Jesus Christ. And obedience, the Savior assures us, brings joy (John 15:10-11).

As Christians, we have a message that makes the melodies of heaven flood our souls. Our Lord gave us the mandate to share that message with everybody everywhere (Mark 16:15). Are we keeping the heavenly harmonies of saving grace sealed up inside ourselves, or are we obediently letting them ring out through our lips and lives? ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O you who are trusting Jesus,  
Redeemed at infinite cost,  
Are you showing Christ to others  
And seeking to win the lost? —Gilmore

Joy is a byproduct of obedience.

---

**Lesson Of The 18-Wheeler** - I was talking with a veteran truck driver about his life on the road. We discussed interstates, cities, truck stops, engines, and tractors. As he spoke about his huge rig, he referred several times to steering axles and drive axles. I asked him to explain the difference. He told me that the front axle of a truck is the steering axle. The drive axles, located under the rear of the cab, transfer the power that is generated by the diesel engine. It's the drive axles that enable the semi to climb steep grades, inch down dangerous slopes, and barrel down the highway to get the load in on time. My discussion with that trucker gave me a new appreciation for those 18-wheelers, and it reminded me of a spiritual truth. Just as steering axles and drive axles are essential to a tractor-trailer, so also direction and power are vital to followers of Christ as we travel through life. The Holy Spirit provides us with both. He was sent to guide us into all truth (Jn. 16:13) and to teach us (1 Cor. 2:10-16). We are empowered by the Spirit to witness (Acts 1:8), to pray (Rom. 8:26), and to live a hope-filled life (15:13). The next time one of those big semis blows by you on the highway, think about the lesson of the 18-wheeler. Call on the direction and power of the Holy Spirit. — by David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Spirit gives us power to live  
A life that's pleasing to the Lord;  
He also guides us and provides  
Direction in God's holy Word.  
—Sper

The power that drives us  
comes from the Spirit inside us.

---

**Power Failure** - I felt mechanically illiterate. I was struggling with a videocassette player for a study group at church and couldn't make it work. Fortunately, someone saw my plight. I stood there appreciatively as he sized up the situation—and then plugged the power cord into the wall outlet.

Why hadn't I thought of that? I was so preoccupied with patch cords and monitors that I overlooked the obvious. I forgot about the power.

If I looked foolish there, it's nothing compared to what the angels see as they observe me. They must be astounded by my efforts to make life work without God's power. I join them in sad wonder. How can I forget that the infinite, personal Spirit of Christ lives within me to guide my life and give me power?

The answer is regrettably clear. There's a loose cord somewhere. When I am preoccupied with pleasing myself, I miss the power that comes from a healthy relationship with Christ. His Spirit enables me to do the will of God, to show His attitudes, and to fulfill His purpose. But I have to stay plugged in through prayer, reflection on God's Word, and complete reliance on His power—not my own.

Lord, help us to see the big picture and stay plugged in to the Source of Power—the Holy Spirit. — by Mart De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I'm weak and helpless in life's fray;  
Lord, may Your power be my stay,  
And may I always seek to be  
Renewed in strength for victory.  
—DJD

A Christian who forgets the Holy Spirit  
is like an unplugged power cord.

---

**[Let the Whole World Hear!](#)** - Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962), the world-famous violinist, earned a fortune with his concerts and compositions, but he generously gave most of it away. So, when he discovered an exquisite violin on one of his trips, he wasn't able to buy it.

Later, having raised enough money to meet the asking price, he returned to the seller, hoping to purchase that beautiful instrument. But to his great dismay it had been sold to a collector. Kreisler made his way to the new owner's home and offered to buy the violin. The collector said it had become his prized possession and he would not sell it. Keenly disappointed, Kreisler was about to leave when he had an idea. "Could I play the instrument once more before it is consigned to silence?" he asked. Permission was granted, and the great virtuoso filled the room with such heart-moving music that the collector's emotions were deeply stirred. "I have no right to keep that to myself," he exclaimed. "It's yours, Mr. Kreisler. Take it into the world, and let people hear it."

To sinners saved by grace, the gospel is like the rapturous harmonies of heaven. We have no right to keep it to ourselves. Jesus tells us to take it out into the world, and let it be heard.— by Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I'll tell the world how Jesus saved me  
And how He gave me a life brand new;  
And I know that if you trust Him  
That all He gave me He'll give to you.  
—Fox © 1958, 1963 Fox Music Publications

Someone told you about Christ.  
Have you told anyone lately?

---

**The Missionary Option** - There are two kinds of people when it comes to missions—those who need to share Christ and those who need to hear about Him. H. A. Ironside used to tell a story about a meeting in which a missionary offering was taken. When the collection plate was handed to a wealthy man, he brushed it aside and said, "I do not believe in missions." "Then take something out," said the usher. "This is for the heathen." As a boy I looked up to missionaries as godly people who sailed to some far-off, uncivilized land and didn't return for several years. Being a missionary was the ultimate calling—nothing could be more noble or admirable. I still believe that God calls men and women to missionary service in other lands, and I still have great respect for them, but my idea of missionaries has changed. Every Christian is part of Christ's mission in the world. What Jesus told His disciples in Acts 1 applies also to us. We are His witnesses and therefore must speak and live so that others will glorify Him when they hear our message and see our faith in action. Being a missionary is not an option—it's what we are called to be. — by Dennis J. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I am a missionary, Lord,  
Wherever I may be;  
At home or in a distant land,  
I'll tell the world of Thee.  
—Brandt

One thing you cannot do about missions—  
escape your responsibility.

---

**Home Missions** - One morning as I was strolling along the shore of the Gulf of Mexico, I saw a middle-aged man sitting in the water. We exchanged greetings, and then he painfully struggled to his feet and began to talk. What a story of angry resentment! As a young man, he was about to set up a law practice when he was called into the armed forces during World War II. While in the military, he contracted a disease that left him maimed in body and bitter in soul. Tears streamed down his cheeks. Sensing that he



needed to know God's love, I explained the gospel to him. Then I asked, "Wouldn't you like to trust Christ as your Savior?" I was thrilled when he said, "Yes, I would." So right there, standing knee-deep in the Gulf of Mexico under a golden morning sun, we prayed. When we finished, he looked at me and made this shocking statement: "Do you realize that no one has ever talked like this to me before!" That educated man had never been told of God's saving grace. This seems hard to believe, doesn't it? Yet, what if we all were asked, "How long has it been since you personally spoke a word for Christ?" In our enthusiasm to reach lost multitudes across the sea, we must not forget that lost person nearby. —R W De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

As You have loved me, let me love  
Lost souls in darkness dwelling;  
To draw the needy ones to You,  
Lord, give a zeal compelling.  
—Bosch

Do we have a burden for the lost  
or have we lost our burden?

---

**Witnesses** - In a criminal court case, witnesses provide vital information about a possible crime. Being a witness means telling the court the truth about what you know. Just as the criminal justice system relies heavily on witnesses, Jesus uses bold, faithful, and credible witnesses to spread His Word and build His church. Before Jesus ascended to His Father, He gave His disciples a final command—to launch a worldwide witnessing campaign. The Holy Spirit would come upon them and give them supernatural power to be His witnesses throughout the world (Acts 1:8). Jesus called these early apostles to go into a world where people did not know about Him and to give a truthful account of what they had seen, heard, and experienced (Acts 4:19-20). Since they had witnessed His perfect life, teachings, suffering, death, burial, and resurrection (Luke 24:48; Acts 1–5), they were to go out and give a truthful testimony about Him. In taking the gospel to the ends of the world, we are called to testify to the truth about Jesus and how He has changed our lives. "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10:14). What are you doing to tell others? — by Marvin Williams ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord and Savior, Christ divine,  
Reign within this heart of mine;  
May my witness ever be  
Always, only, Lord, for Thee.  
—Brandt

God has left us in the world to witness to the world.

---

## **UNCHANGED ORDERS**

You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem . . . and to the ends of the earth. —Acts 1:8

There is a tomb of unknown soldiers in America which has a guard 24 hours a day. Every hour on the hour, 365 days a year, a new soldier reports for duty. When the new guard arrives, he receives his orders from the one who is leaving. The words are always the same: "Orders Remain Unchanged."

The same could be said of the orders that Jesus gave to His disciples. Just before He went back to heaven, He told His followers, "You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). He also said, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19).

From that day to this day, Christian to Christian, generation to generation, the good news of Jesus Christ has been told. We too must tell others that He is the Son of God, that He died to pay the penalty for our sins and that salvation is given to all who put their faith in Him. Then, as we welcome new believers, we are to pass on the orders to tell this good news to those who still don't believe.

Much has changed in the 2,000 years since Jesus chose His first disciples and started the church. But of the command to spread the good news of Christ, these words can still be said: "Orders remain unchanged." ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

ORDERS REMAIN UNCHANGED: SHARE THE GOOD NEWS!

David C. Egner

---

## Acts 1:8 [The Needed Antenna](#)

By **Vernon C. Grounds**

Read: 1 John 1:1-4

The life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life. —1 John 1:2

How would you answer the question, “What is the meaning of life?” Jonathan Gabay of England has published a book containing the answers of well-known individuals to that query. One of them, a church leader, gave an arresting testimony. As a child, he says, he watched his family’s black and white TV, wishing that he could get a clearer picture. But he was glad they had even that unsatisfactory set.

Then his family learned that an outside antenna was needed. “Suddenly,” he said, “we found that we could get clear and distinct pictures. Our enjoyment was transformed.” Then he draws this comparison: “Life without a relationship with God through Jesus Christ is like the television without the antenna.”

Without a knowledge of God and His purposes revealed in Scripture and in Jesus Christ, we finite humans with our sin-darkened minds have at best a blurred picture of the invisible, holy Creator. But when we pick up the Bible and encounter Jesus, the Man who was God-in-the-flesh, the fuzziness vanishes. As the Savior Himself declared, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (Jn. 14:9).

Have you seen Jesus clearly in God’s Word? Are you helping others to see Him too? (1 Jn. 1:1-3; Acts 1:8). [Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries. Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O send Thy Spirit, Lord, now unto me,  
That He may touch my eyes and make me see;  
Show me the truth concealed within Thy Word,  
And in Thy book revealed I see Thee, Lord.  
—Lathbury

You can't get a clear picture of Christ unless you see Him in the Bible.

---

## Acts 1:1-11 [Gentle Witness](#)

By **Bill Crowder**

You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. —Acts 1:8

Years ago, I was hospitalized following a life-threatening, 38-foot fall from a bridge. While I was there, the wife of the man in the next bed stopped to speak to me. “My husband just told me what happened to you,” she said. “We believe God spared your life because He wants to use you. We’ve been praying for you.”

I was stunned. I had grown up going to church, but I had never imagined that God would want to be involved in my life. Her words pointed me to a Savior I had heard of but did not know—and marked the beginning of my coming to Christ. I cherish the memory of those words from a gentle witness who cared enough to say something to a stranger about the God whose love is real. Her words conveyed care and concern, and offered purpose and promise.

Jesus challenged His disciples—and us—to tell others about the love of God: “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Through the Holy Spirit our words and witness can have the power to make an eternal difference in the lives of others. ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries. Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I love to tell the story of unseen things above,  
Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love,  
I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true;  
It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.  
—Hankey

A caring word can accomplish more than we could ever imagine.

---

## Acts 1:1-11 [More Than Waiting](#)

By Anne Cetas

A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father. —John 16:16

I don't know how it works where you live, but when I have to call for a repair for one of my appliances, the company says something like, "The repairman will be there between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m." Since I don't know when the repair person will arrive, all I can do is wait.

Jesus told His followers that He would soon be leaving them and they would need to wait for His return in "a little while" (John 16:16). After His resurrection, they saw Him again and they hoped He would be establishing His kingdom on earth at that time. But He told them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority" (Acts 1:7). They would have to wait even longer.

But they were to do more than wait. Jesus told His followers that they were to "be witnesses to [Him] in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (v.8). And He gave them the Holy Spirit to empower them to do this.

We still wait for Jesus' return. And while we do, it's our delight, in the Holy Spirit's power, to tell and show others who He is, what He has done for all of us through His death and resurrection, and that He has promised to return. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Dear Lord, we love You so much. We want our words and our lives to be a witness of Your goodness and grace. Please use us in ways we never thought possible.

Wait and witness till Jesus returns

---

## Acts 1:1-9 [Being A Witness](#)

By Bill Crowder

You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me. —Acts 1:8

When I was a teen, I witnessed an auto accident. It was a shocking experience that was compounded by what followed. As the only witness to the incident, I spent the ensuing months telling a series of lawyers and insurance adjustors what I had seen. I was not expected to explain the physics of the wreck or the details of the medical trauma. I was asked to tell only what I had witnessed.

As followers of Christ, we are called to be witnesses of what Jesus has done in us and for us. To point people to Christ, we don't need to be able to explain every theological issue or answer every question. What we must do is explain what we have witnessed in our own lives through the cross and the resurrection of the Savior. Even better is that we don't have to rely on ourselves alone to do this. Jesus said, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

As we rely on the Spirit's power, we can point a hurting world to the redeeming Christ. With His help, we can witness to the life-changing power of His presence in our lives! ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I love to tell the story of unseen things above,  
Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love.  
I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true;  
It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.  
—Hankey

Our testimony is the witness of what God has done for us.

---

## Acts 1:8 **Our Source of Power** (by Warren Wiersbe)

Anointing oil speaks of the presence and the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. All believers have received the anointing of the Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27), and therefore we ought to be "a fragrance of Christ" to the Heavenly Father (2 Cor. 2:15). The more we are like Jesus Christ in character and conduct, the more we please our Father; and the more we please Him, the more He can bless and use us for His glory.

I once heard Dr. A. W. Tozer say, "If God were to take the Holy Spirit out of this world, much of what the church is doing would go right on; and nobody would know the difference."

We have so much in human resources available to the church today that we manage to "serve the Lord" without the unction of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. But is that what God wants?

While here on earth, Jesus lived His life and did His work through the anointing of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:16–19). If the spotless Son of God needed the Spirit's power, how much more do we! Do we dare pray in the energy of the flesh when the Spirit is present to assist us (Rom. 8:26; Eph. 2:18)? Do we try to witness for Christ without asking the Spirit to help us (Acts 1:8)? Can we fellowship with our Lord in His Word apart from the ministry of the Spirit of God (Eph. 1:15–23; 3:14–21)? - Warren Wiersbe

---

Acts 1:8

An insurance company sponsored a conference at its huge, national headquarters building in New York City. Agents from all over the country attended. During the convention, one of the delegates from a western state sold insurance to a barber, an elevator operator, and a restaurant employee—all three of whom had worked in that headquarters building for years. That "out of stater" wrote those policies because the local staffers had neglected to do their "homework."

---

**Acts 1:8**

Missionary Keith Gustafson was forced to leave the Congo because of the civil war that erupted in 1997. He reported that as the fighting spread, people in the remote area where he lived knew that soldiers were approaching because of the message of the drums. Down the trails and along the riverbanks came the chilling drumbeat that warned of danger.

The drums of the Congo are also used to alert the tribes when there's been a death, to announce a birth, or to call a meeting. They serve as a general news alert; a messenger follows up with additional information.

We have the opportunity to deliver a news alert to the people with whom we come in contact every day. Our manner of speech and our moral standards can help prepare the way to share the gospel. We can follow up our general testimony with the specific message of the gospel. —D. C. Egnor ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

THEY WITNESS BEST WHO WITNESS WITH THEIR LIVES AND THEIR LIPS.

---

**He Wanted To** - In his book *Love Is Now*, Peter Gilquist mentioned that he and several other friends were invited to speak to a group of UCLA students. After the meeting, a young man expressed a desire to discuss the matter of salvation. So Gilquist arranged to meet with him the next morning. The student said that he really wanted what he saw in the lives of believers. But he hesitated to make a commitment because he thought he would have to tell others about Jesus. Gilquist, however, assured him that to become a Christian he was not required to do anything but place his trust in Christ. Realizing that salvation is by God's grace through faith, the student gladly received the Lord Jesus as his Savior. But a strange thing happened as he went back to his fraternity house. He met a friend and told him of his newfound faith in Christ. Before the day was over, he had testified to every one of his fraternity brothers about Jesus. Our witness for Christ should reflect a grateful heart—a sincere desire to share salvation's blessings with others. If we shrink from giving a word of testimony, let's ask God to give us the desire to speak out for Him. Then we'll witness because we want to. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lead me to some soul today;  
O teach me, Lord, just what to say.  
Friends of mine are lost in sin  
And cannot find their way.  
—Houghton

If you know Christ,  
you'll want others to know Him too.

---

There was a preacher in Kentucky who used to keep on his desk an old tattered leather glove; and each Sunday, before he'd go out to preach, he took that old glove off of the desk, and he would slip his hand into the glove and flex it several times. Then he would take the glove off, put it on his desk, and go back out and preach. Someone said, "Why do you do that?" He said, "To remind myself of this vital lesson that that glove is absolutely impotent and powerless until my hand is slipped into it, and then I say, 'O God, as my

hand has activated this glove, I want you, Lord Jesus, to activate my life, and I want you to live Your life through me by Your Spirit.” And by the way, that’s not a bad illustration, because in the Old Testament—in the Book of Judges—the Bible says that the Spirit of the Lord wore Gideon like a suit of clothes. The Bible says the Lord clothed himself with Gideon.

---

**Tradition Dropped** - In 1983 a fifty-year-old tradition was quietly dropped by the U.S. House of Representatives. The tradition involved the annual reading of George Washington’s farewell address on the occasion of his birthday. Democratic and Republican leaders decided it was useless to continue to read the lengthy address to a mostly empty chamber. “It’s too bad,” said GOP aide, “but it’s time for this to be consigned to the dustbin.”

Stated “The Calgary Herald”: “In past years, it was almost holy writ that the address must be read. Through war and storm for half a century, a member of each chamber has been chosen to read the address.” Declared the newspaper heading, “Nobody listens to Washington’s farewell address.”

We are afraid that something parallel to this is taking place in the Christian church. Fewer and fewer believers are listening to Christ’s farewell message. To His disciples Christ gave clear instructions - to go to all nations with the Gospel and there to make disciples. Glenn Hermann

---

**Homework Neglected** - An insurance company sponsored a conference at its huge, national headquarters building in New York City. Agents from all over the country attended. During the convention, one of the delegates from a western state sold insurance to a barber, an elevator operator, and a restaurant employee—all three of whom had worked in that headquarters building for years. That “out of stater” wrote those policies because the local staffers had neglected to do their “homework.” Our Daily Bread

---

**[The Power Of Pentecost](#)** - A pastor I know and love is discouraged. Although he is diligent in prayer and works hard, his church remains small while a new congregation nearby is rapidly developing into a megachurch. Yet when I think of the alcoholics, drug addicts, and sexually immoral people he has led to the Savior and a new way of life, I see him as one who witnesses in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Because of what happened on the Day of Pentecost (described in Acts 2), we tend to associate the Holy Spirit’s presence and power with amazing phenomena and large numbers. We forget that a little later the same people filled with the same Holy Spirit were rejected, flogged, imprisoned, even executed. But through it all they were powerful witnesses!

The Holy Spirit’s presence and power can be evidenced in a dynamic preacher who attracts great audiences. But it is seen as well in the volunteer who carries on a one-on-one prison ministry, in the person who witnesses to a co-worker or a neighbor, and in the Sunday school teacher who faithfully teaches week after week.

The power of Pentecost is not reserved for the highly gifted. It is available to all believers in Christ who want to serve Him. [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

God's guidance and help that we need day to day  
Are given to all who believe;  
The Spirit has come and He is the source  
Of power that we can receive.  
—Branon

The power of God's Spirit  
gives power to our witness.

**Acts 1:9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.**

KJV Acts 1:9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

- **And after He had said these things** Acts 1:2; Ps 68:18; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50,51; John 6:62; Ephesians 4:8-12
- **a cloud received Him out of their sight** Exodus 19:9; 34:5; Isaiah 19:1; Daniel 7:13; Luke 21:27; Revelation 1:7; 11:12; 14:4
- Acts Videos - [Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

- [Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:6-11 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--2](#) - John MacArthur

## THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

**Gebhard Fugel** painted this masterpiece in 1893. Notice that there is a woman present in his painting, but Luke makes no mention of who was present at the Ascension. The only witnesses we can be sure of would obviously have been the 11 apostles, although there may have been other disciples (including women). Fugel does a wonderful job depicting Jesus lifting up His hands blessing His apostles (Lk 24:50-51) as He was being lifted up and received into the cloud (which many think is the [Shekinah glory cloud](#), cf the statement "taken up in glory" in 1 Ti 3:16).

Surprisingly among the Gospels, only Luke gives a detailed description of the Ascension (cf Mark's short mention Mk 16:19 but the authenticity of this Greek text is questionable). It should be noted that there are numerous passages (see list) that allude directly or indirectly to the Ascension.

**Lenski** feels "The ascension was visible solely for the sake of the apostles."

**Lumby** adds "The Ascension took place while the Eleven beheld, for they were to be witnesses of that event to the world as well as of the life, death, and resurrection. That the Eleven alone saw Christ go into heaven is told us, Mark 16:14. In the Gospel (Luke 24:51), we are told that Christ was parted from them 'while He blessed them.'" (Cambridge Greek Testament)

[See notes](#) below for the seven reasons the ascension is significant.

**Marshall** notes that "The function of the disciples as eyewitnesses to the ascension is underlined by the threefold repetition of the thought in this verse and the next." (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries – Acts)

**Frank Allen** writes "The most important fact recorded in this passage is that of the ascension of Christ. If Christ has not risen our faith is vain; if Christ has not ascended we have no intercessor at the throne of God." But of course we do have an Intercessor. Indeed, all believers now have "a Friend in high places," One Who is continually interceding for us at the right hand of His Father (Ro 8:34+, Heb 7:25+).

The "Apostle's Creed" says "On the third day He rose again; **He ascended into heaven** ([Nicene Creed](#), [Athanasian Creed](#) have an identical phrase), He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and He will come to judge the living and the dead." And so we see that every major Christian creed includes the ascension of Christ. The liturgical calendar always includes [Ascension Day](#) always 40 days after Easter, always falling on a Thursday and 10 days before Pentecost.

**Lenski** - In a moment Jesus will leave these men, but he leaves them with this great promise; in fact, his leaving is to make good that promise, for the ascension of Jesus was necessary in order to send us the Holy Spirit.

Prior to His Crucifixion Jesus had explained

"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" But this He spoke of the Spirit, Whom those who believed in Him were to receive; **for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**" (John 7:38-39+)

So one of the great purposes (see below) of the Ascension was that it prepared the way for the coming down of the Spirit ([see diagram](#)). Jesus had to ascend to the Spirit could descend!

**Stott** comments that "the watershed between the two (Gospel and Acts) was the ascension. Not only did it conclude Luke's first book and introduce his second (Acts 1:9), but it terminated Jesus' earthly ministry and inaugurated his heavenly ministry." John 7:38-39-note ([The Message of Acts](#))

**And after He had said these things** - Literally "having spoken," indicating He was finished speaking and the ascension did not interrupt His discourse.

**William Arnot** comments on Jesus' last words - These **words!** They were the last and yet not the last. The last in the ministry of His visible presence ; but He will continue to teach them still. His word lives and abides forever. He will make good His promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Mt 28:20)



**J Vernon McGee** quips - The ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ is an important and significant miracle in the ministry of the Lord. This is especially true for our space age when eyes are turned aloft and we are talking about travel in space. Space travel isn't really new. The Lord Jesus took off, and He didn't need a launching pad or a space suit or a missile.

**Chrysostom** says: "Of Christ's resurrection the disciples saw the final part, not the first part, but of his ascension they saw the first part, not the final part."

**He was lifted up while they were looking on** - In the Gospel Luke says Jesus lifted His hands to bless them, and here we see this occurred as He Himself was being lifted up.

And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they, after worshiping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, (Lk 24:50-52)

In Acts 1:12 Luke records the location as "from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away."

**The Holman Apologetic Commentary on the Bible** has this comment on Luke's mention of two locations - Bethany (Lk 24:50) and "mount called Olivet" (Acts 1:12) - When and where did Jesus ascend to heaven? Answers hinge on whether Luke was narrating the same event in Luke 24 and Acts 1. The difference in location (Bethany in Luke 24:50-51 and the Mount of Olives in Acts 1:9) is not a definitive indication that the events are distinct since the Mount of Olives stood between Jerusalem and Bethany with Bethany on the eastern side of the Mount. It is possible that in one case Luke was naming the closest town, while in the other he named the key topographical locale.

**F F Bruce** - The place where their Master was taken from their sight, Luke tells us, was the Mount of Olives, to the east of Jerusalem, "a sabbath day's journey distant." This was a distance of 2,000 cubits or around one kilometer, ingeniously reckoned by interpreting Ex. 16:29 ("let no one go out of his place on the seventh day") in the light of Num. 35:5 (where the Levites' pasturelands are defined by a radius of 2,000 cubits from any one of the six "cities of refuge"). According to Luke 24:50, Jesus "led them out as far as Bethany"; but it is not certain that the same occasion is referred to there as here. **Bethany** lies on the eastern slopes of Olivet, about fifteen stadia (two and a half kilometers) from Jerusalem (cf. John 11:18).

Luke had previewed this event in Acts 1:2 [note](#) writing "until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen."

**Lifted up** (1869)(**epairo**) means to lift up, hold up ("lifting up holy hands" = 1 Ti 2:8, cf Lk 24:50 as a gesture of blessing; Lxx = Ps 134:2), in Lxx of Moses lifting up his hands and Israel prevailing in the battle (Ex 17:11), lift up a sail (hoist) (Acts 27:40). Figuratively, to rise up against, to be in opposition (2 Cor 10:5, cf Lxx = Ezra 4:19 "that city has risen up against the kings", Da 11:14 "many will rise up against the king of the South"). To lift up or exalt oneself (be arrogant, put on airs) (2 Cor 11:20; Lxx - Jer 13:15 - "do not be haughty").

The passive voice in Acts 1:9 means "to be taken up" and indicates that the ascension like the resurrection was an act of the Father, Who first raised Jesus from the dead and then exalted Him to heaven. As Chrysostom says 'the royal chariot (was) sent for Him'.

**Epairo** is used in several idiomatic expression - To lift up one's voice = speak loudly, cry out (Lk 11.27, Acts 2:14, Acts 14:11. Lxx - Jdg 2:4, Jdg 9:7); lift up one's head = take courage (Lk 21.28); lift up one's heel against = oppose someone (John 13.18 quoting Ps 41:9; cf Lxx = 1 Sa 20:33 = Saul lifted up his spear against Jonathan); lift up one's eyes = look upon, to notice (Mt 17.8, Lk 6:20, Lk 16:23, Lk 18:13, Jn 4:35, Jn 17:1; Lxx = Ge 13:10, Ezek 18:6)

In classical Greek the most common meaning of *epairō* is "to lift up something," such as as an object. *Epairo* was sometimes used figuratively in classic Greek of "exalting oneself."

**Epairo** - 19x in 19v - exalts(1), hoisting(1), lift(3), lifted(4), lifting(4), raised(5), turning(1).

Matt. 17:8; Lk. 6:20; Lk. 11:27; Lk. 16:23; Lk. 18:13; Lk. 21:28; Lk. 24:50; Jn. 4:35; Jn. 6:5; Jn. 13:18; Jn. 17:1; Acts 1:9; Acts 2:14; Acts 14:11; Acts 22:22; Acts 27:40; 2 Co. 10:5; 2 Co. 11:20; 1 Tim. 2:8

**Epairo** - 84x in 83v in the Septuagint -

Ge 7:17 (**lifted up** the ark); Gen. 13:10 (Lot **lifted up** his eyes); Ex. 7:20 (he **lifted up** the staff and struck the water); Ex. 10:13; Exod. 14:16; Exod. 17:11; Num. 6:26 (The LORD **lift up** His countenance on you, And give you peace.); Nu. 20:11; Jdg. 2:4; Jdg. 9:7; Jdg. 11:1; Jdg. 21:2; Ruth 1:9 (they **lifted up** their voices and wept); Ruth 1:14; 1 Sam. 20:33; 2 Sam. 5:12; 2 Sam. 13:36; 2 Sam. 18:24; 2 Sam. 20:21; 1 Ki. 1:5; 1 Ki. 11:27; 1 Ki. 12:24; 2 Ki. 9:32; 2 Ki. 14:10; 2 Ki. 18:29; 2 Ki. 19:10; 1 Chr. 21:16; 2 Chr. 25:19; Ezr. 4:19; Ezr.

7:28; Neh. 8:6; Est. 3:13; Est. 8:12; Job 31:21; Job 41:26; Ps. 8:1; Ps. 24:7; Ps. 24:9; Ps. 28:9; Ps. 37:35; Ps. 47:9 (He is highly **exalted**); Ps. 73:18; Ps. 74:3; Ps. 75:5; Ps. 93:3; Ps. 102:10; Ps. 106:26; Ps. 134:1; Prov. 3:5; Prov. 19:18; Prov. 24:17; Prov. 30:13; Isa. 6:1; Isa. 6:4; Jer. 13:15; Jer. 47:6; Lam. 4:2; Ezek. 17:14; Ezek. 18:6; Dan. 11:14; Obad. 1:3; Hab. 3:11; Zeph. 1:11; Zech. 1:21;

**While they were looking on** - While they were beholding. The point Luke stresses (and which he reiterates in Acts 1:10 with the phrase "they were gazing intently") is that the apostles actually witnessed Jesus' ascension and could testify to the truth of that event. Previous to this "disappearance," when Jesus had vanished from their presence during the 40 days after His resurrection, He vanished instantly from their sight (cf Lk 24:31), but here Luke records a gradual departure.

**William Barclay** says "It was necessary that as Jesus in a moment of time had arrived in the world in a moment of time He should leave it."

**Homer Kent** - Throughout the period of the post-resurrection forty days, Jesus had frequently appeared to the disciples, and during the intervals he had disappeared. Each time, apparently, they had no reason to suppose that he would not reappear shortly, and until this time he had not disappointed them. (Jerusalem to Rome: Studies in the Book of Acts)

**Lenski** - Jesus was not suddenly snatched away out of their sight; this time he did not vanish as he had done when leaving them during the forty days. Now his leaving had a different meaning. Before this, when he would vanish, they knew that he would appear again; now his presence was slowly and visibly taken away, upward, in a heavenly way. They see it all with their very eyes as the witnesses they were to be. An awed silence comes over them. Jesus spreads his hands over them in blessing (Luke 24:50) and slowly, majestically, mightily rises heavenward from the earth, higher and higher. Their eyes are wide with astonishment and follow him and strain in looking (see [atenizo](#) in Acts 1:10).

**Looking** (present tense)(991)(**blepo**) basically means to have sight, to see, to look at, then to observe, to discern, to perceive with the eye, and frequently implies special contemplation. **Blepo** indicates greater vividness than **horao**, a similar verb meaning "to see", for according to Vine **blepo** expresses "a more intentional, earnest contemplation. in Luke 6:41, of beholding the mote in a brother's eye; Luke 24:12, of beholding the linen clothes in the empty tomb; Acts 1:9, of the gaze of the disciples when the Lord ascended." **Robertson** adds that "the present participle accents the fact that they were **looking** directly at Jesus."

## WELCOME HOME SON!

**And a cloud received Him** - This cloud was undoubtedly not your routine cumulus or cirrus cloud, but was most likely the [Shekinah glory cloud](#). As Longnecker writes below, the Son's reception into the cloud was in a sense a sign of the Father's approval. It was a "divine homecoming!"

**J Vernon McGee** agrees asking "What kind of a cloud was that? Was it a moisture cloud? No, this was the same [Shekinah glory cloud](#) that had filled the tabernacle. In His high priestly prayer He had prayed: "And now, O Father, **glorify** thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). When He was born into this world, He was wrapped in swaddling clothes. When He left this earth, He was wrapped in glory clouds. This is the way He returned to the Father's right hand."

**Richard Longnecker** - The **cloud** is undoubtedly meant to symbolize the [Shekinah](#)—the visible manifestation of the divine presence and glory. Such a cloud hovered above the tabernacle in the wilderness as a visible token of the glory of God that dwelt within the tabernacle (cf. Ex 40:34). Such a cloud also enveloped Jesus and three of his disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration as a visible sign of God's presence and approval of his Son (cf. Mk 9:7 par.). And something very similar is presented here: Jesus as the ascended Lord is enveloped by the Shekinah cloud, **the visible manifestation of God's presence, glory, and approval..** (Longnecker adds that) Luke's point is that the missionary activity of the early church rested not only on Jesus' mandate but also on his living presence in heaven and the sure promise of his return." (Expositor's Bible Commentary)(Expositor's Bible Commentary) (Bolding added)

**Homer Kent** - This cloud was probably the [Shekinah](#), the divine cloud of glory which rested above the tabernacle in the days of Moses, signifying the presence of the Lord (Ex 40:34).(Jerusalem to Rome: Studies in the Book of Acts)

**F F Bruce** - The transfiguration, the ascension (as here described), and the parousia are three successive manifestations of Jesus' divine glory. The cloud in each case is to be understood as the cloud which envelops the glory of God (the [Shekinah](#))—that cloud which, resting above the Mosaic tabernacle and filling Solomon's temple, was the visible token to Israel that the divine glory had taken up residence there (Ex. 40:34; 1 Kings 8:10–11). So, in the last moment that the apostles saw their Lord with outward vision, they were granted "a theophany: Jesus is enveloped in the cloud of the divine presence." (NICNT - Book of Acts)

**Cloud** ([3507](#)) (**nephele**) is a diminutive of nephos and thus refers to a small cloud. (Luke 12:54 [cf. 1 Ki 18:44]). Nephos is repeatedly associated with appearances of God -- God the Father spoke from a cloud (Mt 17:5, Mark 9:7, Lk 9:35), the Son departed in a cloud (Acts 1:9) and will return in a cloud (Mt 24:30, 26:64, Mk 13:26, 14:62, Lk 21:27, Rev 1:7, cf. Rev 14:14-16+), the Son was transfigured in a cloud (Lk 9:34-35), saints will meet the Son in the clouds (1 Th 4:17).

**Baker** nephele is "used generally (2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 1:12; Sept.: Ge 9:13, 14; Jdg. 5:4; Ps. 36:6; Eccl. 11:4); the pillar of cloud in the desert which accompanied supernatural appearances and events (1 Cor. 10:1, 2 [cf. Sept. Ex. 13:21, 22]); in connection with Christ (Lk 9:35, "a voice out of the cloud"); at His transfiguration, a luminous cloud (Mt. 17:5; Mk 9:7; Lk 9:34); as receiving Christ up at His ascension (Acts 1:9); as surrounding Him at His Second Coming (Mt 24:30; 26:64; Mk 13:26; 14:62; Lk 21:27; Rev. 1:7; 14:14-16); as surrounding ascending or descending saints or angels (1 Th 4:17; Rev. 10:1; 11:12 [cf. in regard to God in Sept.: Ps. 18:12; 97:2; Isa. 19:1]). (Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament)

**Gilbrant - In classical Greek** *nephelē* occurs mostly in poetic writings (Liddell-Scott). It has multiple uses, including literal and figurative. Thus it stands for literal clouds or figuratively for something clouded, such as a memory (ibid.). *Nephelē* is related to *nephos* (3371) which describes a larger cloud mass. **In the Septuagint** *nephelē* is used of the "cloud" that accompanied the covenant of God with His people (Genesis 9:13-16). God used the pillar of "cloud" by day to direct the Israelites on their march out of Egypt (Exodus 13:21; see 1 Corinthians 10:1,2). The cloud also was used to protect Israel from her enemies (Ex 14:19,20). At each special revelation, on the Tent of Meeting and Mt. Sinai, the "cloud" concealed and displayed God's presence and message to His people (cf. Ex 19:9; 33:9,10; 40:34). Occasionally the word *nephelē* is used in the Scriptures in a figurative way. For example, God's mercy and faithfulness "reacheth unto the clouds" (Ps 36:5). God blots out transgression like a cloud (Isaiah 44:22); Judah's goodness is like a "morning cloud" (Hos 6:5), and the Lord "rides" upon a "cloud" when He comes to judge (Isa 19:1). In the **New Testament** very significant events took place in clouds. One such event was the transfiguration of Jesus Christ (Mk 9:7). The Acts account of the ascension of Christ says a *nephelē* "received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9). When Christ referred to His coming again, He said, "You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Mk 14:62, NIV). The apostle Paul said that all believers "shall be caught up...in the clouds (*nephelais*), to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Th 4:17). As in the Old Testament, these New Testament occurrences indicate that when God chose to do something very significant to, for, and with His people, He often did it within *nephelais* ("clouds"). ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Nephele** - 25x in 21v - cloud(18), clouds(7).

Matthew 17:5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

Matthew 24:30 "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

Matthew 26:64 Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."

Mark 9:7 Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!"

Mark 13:26 "Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory.

Mark 14:62 And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."

Luke 9:34 While he was saying this, a cloud formed and began to overshadow them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

Luke 9:35 Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!"

Luke 12:54 And He was also saying to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming,' and so it turns out.

Luke 21:27 "Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory.

Acts 1:9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

1 Corinthians 10:1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea;

1 Corinthians 10:2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

Jude 1:12 These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead,

uprooted;

Revelation 1:7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

Revelation 10:1 I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire;

Revelation 11:12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them.

Revelation 14:14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand.

Revelation 14:15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe."

Revelation 14:16 Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

#### **Nephele** - in the Septuagint (Lxx) -

Gen. 9:13 = My bow in the **cloud**; Ge. 9:14; 9:16; Ex. 13:21 = The LORD was going before them in a pillar of **cloud** by day to lead them on the way; Ex 13:22;14:19; 14:24;. 16:10; Exod. 19:9; Exod. 19:13; Exod. 19:16; Exod. 24:15 = Moses went up to the mountain, and the **cloud** covered the mountain.; Exod. 24:16; Exod. 24:18; Exod. 33:9; Exod. 33:10; Exod. 34:5; Exod. 40:34 = Then the **cloud** covered the tent of meeting, and the (SHEKINAH) glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.; Exod. 40:35; Exod. 40:36; Exod. 40:37; Exod. 40:38; Lev. 16:2; Num. 9:15; Num. 9:16; Num. 9:17; Num. 9:18; Num. 9:19; Num. 9:20; Num. 9:21; Num. 9:22; Num. 10:11; Num. 10:12; Num. 10:34; Num. 11:25; Num. 12:5; Num. 12:10; Num. 14:10; Num. 14:14; Num. 16:42; Deut. 1:33; Deut. 31:15; Jos. 24:7; Jdg. 5:4; 2 Sam. 22:12; 1 Ki. 8:10; 1 Ki. 8:11; 1 Ki. 18:44; 1 Ki. 18:45; 2 Chr. 5:13; 2 Chr. 5:14; Neh. 9:12; Neh. 9:19; Job 26:8; Job 36:27; Job 36:29; Job 37:11; Ps. 18:11; Ps. 18:12; Ps. 36:5; Ps. 57:10; Ps. 68:34; Ps. 77:17; Ps. 78:14; Ps. 78:23; Ps. 89:6; Ps. 97:2; Ps. 99:7; Ps. 105:39; Ps. 108:4; Ps. 135:7; Ps. 147:8; Eccl. 11:4; Isa. 4:5; Isa. 5:6; Isa. 14:14; Isa. 18:4; Isa. 19:1; Isa. 44:22; Isa. 45:8; Isa. 60:8; Jer. 4:13; Jer. 10:13; Jer. 51:16; Lam. 3:44; Ezek. 1:4; Ezek. 1:20; Ezek. 1:28; Ezek. 10:3; Ezek. 10:4; Ezek. 30:18; Ezek. 31:3; Ezek. 31:10; Ezek. 31:14; Ezek. 32:7; Ezek. 34:12; Ezek. 38:9; Ezek. 38:16; Dan. 4:11; Dan. 4:22; Dan. 7:13; Hos. 6:4; Hos. 13:3; Joel 2:2; Nah. 1:3; Zeph. 1:15; Zech. 2:13;

**Tony Garland** notes that "Clouds are often associated with the glory of the Lord. Clouds were often one aspect of the visible manifestation of the Lord's presence (Ex. 16:10; 19:9, 16; 24:15-16; 34:5; 40:34; Deu. 5:22). Clouds indicated His presence over the mercy seat where He dwelt between the cherubim (Lev. 16:2). During Solomon's prayer dedicating the Temple, he recognized God's habitation as the dark cloud (2 Chr. 6:1). In response, the glory of the Lord filled the Temple (2 Chr. 7:1), no doubt including a manifestation of clouds. The psalmist understood dark clouds to be God's canopy (Ps. 18:11; Ps. 97:2). The manifestation of God by clouds indicates His localized presence on the earth, among men:

the [Shekinah glory](#) is the visible manifestation of the presence of God. It is the majestic presence or manifestation of God in which He descends to dwell among men. Whenever the invisible God becomes visible, and whenever the omnipresence of God is localized, this is the [Shekinah](#) Glory. The usual title found in Scriptures for the [Shekinah](#) Glory is the glory of Jehovah, or the glory of the Lord. The Hebrew form is *Kvod Adonai*, which means "the glory of Jehovah" and describes what the [Shekinah glory](#) is. The Greek title, *Doxa Kurion*, is translated as "the glory of the Lord." *Doxa* means "brightness," "brilliance," or "splendor," and it depicts how the [Shekinah](#) Glory appears. Other titles give it the sense of "dwelling," which portrays what the Shekinah Glory does. The Hebrew word [Shekinah](#), from the root *shachan*, means "to dwell." The Greek word *skeinei*, which is similar in sound as the Hebrew [Shekinah](#) (Greek has no "sh" sound), means "to tabernacle" . . . In the Old Testament, most of these visible manifestations took the form of light, fire, or cloud, or a combination of these. A new form appears in the New Testament: the Incarnate Word. (Fruchtenbaum)

**Received** (5274) ([hupolambano](#) from **hupo** = under + [lambano](#) = to take) means literally to take from someone, to literally take up from below and so to cause to ascend (as here in Acts 1:9), to receive as a guest (3 John 1:8), to take up (a word) and answer or reply (Lk 10:30), to take up (an idea) and thus to think, assume, suppose. The preposition **hupo** conveys the idea that the cloud received Jesus by appearing under Him.

**Robertson** says "literally here "took under him." He seemed to be supported by the cloud."

**Out of their sight** - Literally "away from their eyes (opthalmos)."

It is surprising how many NT passages allude to the Ascension of Christ. As I did more reading, it became apparent that a number of writers deny that the Ascension actually occurred. But such a liberal view is strongly refuted by a host of passages which refer

directly or indirectly to the Ascension. As Lenski says "Let no such allegory (Ed: Allegorical Interpretation) becloud (Ed: Great Pun!) the stupendous fact that all in an instant the body of Jesus was in the glory of heaven."

Acts 1:2 until **the day when He was taken up to heaven**, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.

Acts 2:34 "For it was not David **who ascended into heaven**, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

Mark 16:19 So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.

Luke 9:51 **When the days were approaching for His ascension**, He was determined to go to Jerusalem;

John 3:13 "No one has **ascended into heaven**, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.

John 6:62 "What then if you should behold the **Son of Man ascending where He was before?**

John 7:33 Therefore Jesus said, "For a little while longer I am with you, then **I go to Him who sent Me**.

John 7:39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because **Jesus was not yet glorified**.

John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come **that He would depart out of this world to the Father**, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

John 13:3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and **was going back to God**,

John 13:36 Simon Peter \*said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered, "**Where I go, you cannot follow Me now**; but you will follow later."

John 14:2-3 In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; **for I go to prepare a place for you**. 3 "**If I go and prepare a place for you**, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

John 14:12 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because **I go to the Father**.

John 14:28 "You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because **I go to the Father**, for the Father is greater than I.

John 16:5 "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'

John 16:10 and concerning righteousness, because **I go to the Father and you no longer see Me**;

John 16:17 Some of His disciples then said to one another, "What is this thing He is telling us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, '**because I go to the Father?**'"

John 16:28 "I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and **going to the Father**."

John 17:13 "But **now I come to You**; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.

John 20:17 Jesus \*said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for **I have not yet ascended to the Father**; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'"

Ephesians 1:20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and (IMPLIED) seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

Ephesians 4:9-10 Now this expression, "**He ascended**," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also **He who ascended far above all the heavens**, so that He might fill all things.

1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, **Taken up in glory**.

Hebrews 4:14 Therefore, since we have **a great high priest who has passed through the heavens**, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Hebrews 6:19-20 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one **which enters within the veil, 20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us**, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:24-26 but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. 25 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. 26 For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and **exalted above the heavens**;

Hebrews 9:24 For **Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands**, a mere copy of the true one, but **into heaven itself**, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

1 Peter 3:22 who is at the right hand of God, **having gone into heaven**, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

#### Related Resources:

- [Where is Jesus now? Is Jesus in heaven?](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary - [Ascension of Christ](#), [Ascension](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Ascension of Jesus Christ](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Ascension of Christ](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Ascension of Christ](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Ascension](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Ascension](#) [Ascension \(2\)](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Ascension](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Ascension](#)

---

**Gotquestions** writes that the Ascension of Jesus Christ is significant for several reasons:

**1) It signaled the end of His earthly ministry.** God the Father had lovingly sent His Son into the world at Bethlehem, and now the Son was returning to the Father. The period of human limitation was at an end.

**2) It signified success in His earthly work.** All that He had come to do, He had accomplished. (Ed: cf John 4:34, John 17:4)

**3) It marked the return of His heavenly glory.** Jesus' glory had been veiled during His sojourn on earth, with one brief exception at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9).

**4) It symbolized His exaltation by the Father** (Ephesians 1:20-23). The One with whom the Father is well pleased (Matthew 17:5) was received up in honor and given a name above all names (Philippians 2:9).

**5) It allowed Him to prepare a place for us** (John 14:2).

**6) It indicated the beginning of His new work as High Priest** (Hebrews 4:14-16) and Mediator of the New Covenant (Hebrews 9:15).

**7) It set the pattern for His return.** When Jesus comes to set up the Kingdom, He will return just as He left—literally, bodily, and visibly in the clouds (Acts 1:11; Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7).

Currently, the Lord Jesus is in heaven. The Scriptures frequently picture Him at the right hand of the Father—a position of honor and authority (Psalm 110:1; Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 8:1). Christ is the Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18), the giver of spiritual gifts (Ephesians 4:7-8), and the One who fills all in all (Ephesians 4:9-10). (For full article see [What is the meaning and importance of the ascension of Jesus Christ?](#))

---

**Here is John Maile's summary of the significance of the Ascension:**

(1) The ascension is the confirmation of the exaltation of Christ and his present Lordship.



- (2) The ascension is “the explanation of the continuity between the ministry of Jews and that of the church.”
- (3) The ascension is “the culmination of the resurrection appearances.”
- (4) The ascension is “the prelude to the sending of the Spirit.”
- (5) The ascension is “the foundation of Christian mission.” Sixth, it is “the pledge of the return of Christ.”

[John F. Maile - “The Ascension in Luke-Acts.” Tyndale Bulletin 37 \(1986\):29-59.](#)

---

**Norman Geisler** comments on how Acts 1:9-11 is misinterpreted by the cultists...

**MISINTERPRETATION:** At the ascension, several disciples witnessed Christ vanishing into the clouds. Then some angels told the disciples that Christ at the second coming “will come in just the same way as you have watched him go into heaven” (Acts 1:9–11 NASB)—that is, he disappeared from view. The Jehovah’s Witnesses say this passage indicates that the second coming will be an invisible event (Reasoning from the Scriptures, 1989, 243). (**Ed:** Interesting that the interpretation by some [preterists](#) is not that much different! No comment!)

**CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION:** Jesus ascended bodily and visibly, as witnessed by the disciples (Acts 1:9). He disappeared from view only after he had bodily and visibly ascended (“a cloud received Him out of their sight”). In the same way, Christ will come again bodily and visibly (Acts 1:11). A bodily and visible second coming is the consistent teaching of Scripture. For example, Revelation 1:7 says, “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen” (NASB). Matthew 24:30 says, “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” (NASB). ([When Cultists Ask: A Popular Handbook on Cultic Misinterpretation](#))

---

## **Acts 1:12-14 Going Away**

### **Luke 24:36-53**

They worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. —Luke 24:52

It was the most unusual “going-away party” ever. There stood Jesus, who had recently risen from the grave. And there stood His followers, listening to His teaching as they had on so many occasions. Jesus spoke about the coming of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49), and He told them that it would be their task to be His witnesses.

Then an unusual thing happened. Luke said that Jesus led His disciples to Bethany (v.50), and as He was blessing them He was “carried up into heaven” (v.51). Mark recorded, “He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God” (16:19).

To see Jesus ascend to heaven was amazing, but what happened next was also remarkable. Instead of being downcast because He had gone away, the disciples responded with renewed purpose. They worshiped Him (Luke 24:52). They joyfully returned to Jerusalem, where they prayed (Acts 1:12-14). Then, after receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), “they went out and preached everywhere” (Mark 16:20).

Although Jesus has gone away, the Holy Spirit makes real to us His presence so that we too can worship, pray, and witness as His disciples did centuries ago. These are still the best ways to celebrate what Jesus has done for us: Worship. Prayer. Witness. —J Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Jesus conquered death and fear;  
Now He reigns from heaven above.  
Spread the word both far and near  
Of His great redeeming love. —D. De Haan

Jesus had to go away so the Holy Spirit could come to stay.

---

## **Acts 1:1-11 Ascended and Enthroned**

### **By Vernon C. Grounds**

He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens. —Ephesians 4:10

Call the roll of some of the states men and dictators who for a brief time dominated the global stage in this century: Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Kaiser Wilhelm II, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin. Where are they now? Dead and

buried! But where is Jesus Christ, the rejected and crucified first-century Galilean? He is alive forevermore, enthroned in celestial glory.

After dying on the cross to redeem us, Jesus rose from the grave. Forty days later, He dramatically departed from our sphere of time and space by ascending into the clouds as His disciples looked on. He returned to the indescribable splendor and joy of His heavenly home.

Although we don't often think about Jesus' ascension, it was a pivotal event in His ministry. It marked the beginning of His high-priestly ministry in glory. No longer limited to being in one place at a time, He could be present anywhere as our invisible Intercessor, constantly praying for us (Heb. 7:25). And since our High Priest is also the almighty Sovereign (Matt. 28:18), He controls all things and can make even life's worst evils work out ultimately for His praise and for our good. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What a comfort! Jesus lives on high!  
He who came to save us, He who bled and died,  
Now is crowned with glory at His Father's side,  
Nevermore to suffer, nevermore to die,  
Jesus, King of Glory, is gone up on high.  
—Havergal

Jesus came into the world to intervene for us; now He is in heaven to intercede for us.

---

## **Acts 1:9 - Why The Ascension?**

**By Herbert Vander Lugt**

John 16:5-15; Luke 24:50-53

If I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. —John 16:7

God raised Jesus from the grave and exalted Him to His right hand in heaven (Ephesians 1:20). Yet for 40 days Jesus made many bodily appearances to His disciples. But the 40th day was different. With His disciples looking on, He slowly ascended into the sky until a cloud hid Him from view (Acts 1:9).

Why didn't Jesus continue His visible appearances on earth? He had told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would not begin His work until after He left (John 16:7). The time had come for His followers to trust His word instead of relying on their physical senses (20:25,29). Their Master's slow, visible, and final ascent was a dramatic way of saying to them that a new era was about to begin.

From heaven Jesus would send the Holy Spirit to replace His bodily presence. Christ would form the church and rule as its Head (Ephesians 1:22-23). By His Spirit, He would live within His followers and fill them with peace and power. In heaven He would intercede for them before the Father's throne (Hebrews 7:25). He would no longer be visibly present, but He would still be with them in a very real way (Matthew 28:19-20).

The same is true for every believer today. That's why we can be thankful that Jesus ascended to heaven. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

He who came to save us, He who bled and died,  
Now is crowned with glory at His Father's side;  
Nevermore to suffer, nevermore to die,  
Jesus, King of glory, is gone up on high.  
—Havergal

Jesus ascended to heaven that He might continue His work on earth.

---

## **Acts 1:1-11**

### **The Ascension**

By Julie Ackerman Link

While they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. —Acts 1:9

When the husband of my longtime friend and publishing colleague collapsed and later died, there was no doubt that life had slipped

away from him. There were witnesses. The same was true when Jesus died. But three days later, Jesus was raised from the dead! We have no doubt that this is true because there were witnesses who later saw Him alive.

When we gathered for Dave's memorial service, we read familiar passages of Scripture that affirm our hope that he is now enjoying new life in heaven. But we claimed these promises by faith because none of us witnessed Dave go to heaven. There was, however, a witness who saw Jesus in heaven. Not long after witnesses saw Jesus ascend (Acts 1:9), Stephen saw the heavens open "and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" (7:56). One of the reasons we know that Jesus spoke the truth about going to prepare a place for us (John 14:2) is that He has been seen alive in heaven.

When a loved one goes ahead of us to heaven, we feel as if we're being pulled in the opposite direction—down into an abyss of sadness. Yet, because God kept His promise to raise Christ and take Him to heaven, we can trust Him to do the same for all who love and follow Him. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Lord has promised to prepare  
A place in heaven above—  
A home where we will always be  
With Him and those we love.  
—Sper

The promise of heaven is our eternal hope.

---

## Acts 1:1-11

### The Ascension

By Herbert Vander Lugt

I go to prepare a place for you... I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. —John 14:2-3

The repeated appearances of Jesus after His death brought His followers such joy that they must have wanted the visits to continue indefinitely. But on the 40th day after His resurrection, having given His disciples final instructions, Jesus slowly ascended and a cloud hid Him from view.

Jesus could have vanished instantly, as He had done on previous occasions. But this time He chose to ascend visibly to impress on His followers that this was the end of His visits. His bodily presence would soon be replaced by something even better. Jesus' ascension marked the beginning of a new era.

In His glorified human body, the Lord Jesus ascended, entered heaven, sat down at the right hand of God, sent the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:16-18; Acts 2:33), began His ministry of intercession for us (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25), and now permeates the whole universe with His spiritual presence and power (Eph. 1:15-23; 4:10).

An ancient writing says that Jesus ascended bodily into heaven "our entrance to secure, and our abode to prepare." That's true. But it's also true that as God, He is always spiritually present with us and will be "to the end of the age" (Mt. 28:20). What a wonderful Savior we have! ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Lord ascended bodily  
From earth to heaven's throne;  
Now He is there to intercede  
For those who are His own.  
—Sper

Jesus went away so the Spirit could come to stay.

**Acts 1:10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.**

KJV Acts 1:10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

- **And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going** Acts 1:2 Kings 2:11,12

- **behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them** Acts 10:3,30; Da 7:9; Mt 17:2; 28:3; Mk 16:5; Lk 24:4; John 20:12; Rev 3:4; 7:14
- Acts Videos - [Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:6-11 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--2](#) - John MacArthur

**And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going-** As noted below the verb Luke uses gives us a striking depiction of the apostles straining and peering earnestly into the sky. For 3 years they had followed Him and now, in this moment, He disappeared from their vision. One cannot even imagine the thoughts that must have been racing through their minds!

**Marshall** is probably correct when he writes that "The disciples are portrayed as looking intently into the sky as Jesus disappears, a detail which suggests that they are longing for the reappearance of Jesus or some other happening which will indicate that what they have seen is not the final act in the drama. Their unspoken prayer is answered by the appearance of two figures dressed in white. (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries – Acts)

As **Toussaint** says "These verses describe the Lord's Ascension but they also anticipate His return....The Ascension of Christ marked the conclusion of His ministry on earth in His bodily presence. It also exalted Him to the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:33–36; 5:30–31; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 12:2). At the same time the Ascension meant that the continuing work of Christ on earth was now placed in the hands of His disciples (Acts 1:1–2, 8). It was imperative that the Ascension occur so that the promised Comforter could come (cf. John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; Acts 2:33–36). The Holy Spirit would empower the disciples as they ministered the gospel and waited for the kingdom.." (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

**Gazing intently** (present tense = continually gazing)(816)(**atenizo**) from from **atenes** = strained, intent which in turn is from **a** = intensifies + **teino** = to stretch, to extend or to strain all of which help to paint a picture of the meaning of **atenizo**) means to look intently, to fix one's gaze on something, to stare at something, to gaze earnestly, to look straight at something, to fasten one's eyes upon. **Atenizo** was used in medical texts to denote a peculiar fixed look.

This verb is used by Luke to describe the eyes of all in the synagogue fixed on Jesus after He had read the passage from Isaiah (Lk 4:16-21). In Lk. 22:56 "a servant-girl, seeing him as he sat in the firelight and **looking intently** (**atenizo**) at him, said, "This man was with Him too."

Almost all uses of the verb **atenizo** are by Luke - These verses make an interesting study in light of the truth that this verb does not speak of a casual glance but an intense, focused gaze! -

Lk. 4:20; Lk. 22:56; Acts 1:10; Acts 3:4; Acts 3:12; Acts 6:15; Acts 7:55; Acts 10:4; Acts 11:6; Acts 13:9; Acts 14:9; Acts 23:1; 2 Co. 3:7; 2 Co. 3:13

Now to draw our attention back to earth, Luke says **Behold!**"

**Behold** (2400)(**idou**) is the second person singular aorist middle imperative of **eidon** which means to see, perceive, look at. In the NT **idou** is used as a demonstrative particle that draws attention to what follows.**idou** in the **middle voice** means "you yourself look, see, perceive!" The **aorist imperative** is a command emphasizing "Do it now! Don't delay!" **Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

**Two men in white clothing stood beside them** - While the text does not state specifically, these men were undoubtedly angels. In the Bible angels are always described with masculine gender and are frequently are dressed in white (cf Jn 20:12, Mt 28:2-5, Lk 24:23 with Lk 24:2-7). Recall that the Biblical pattern to authenticate a message (or an accusation) is two witnesses - "Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true." (Jn 8:17)

**Wiersbe:** Angels play an important role in the ministry described in Acts, just as they do today, even though we cannot see them (see Acts 5:19-20; 8:26; 10:3-7; 12:7-10, 23; 27:23).

Hebrews 1:14-+ Are they (ANGELS) not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

**Utley** - Angels appeared at His birth, His temptation, in Gethsemane, at the tomb, and here at His ascension.

**Anderson** - The ascension of the Lord was authenticated by His being received up visibly in a cloud and by an announcement to His disciples by two men in white apparel, evidently angels. Both emphasise the fact that He is in heaven. (What the Bible teaches – Acts and James)

**John Stott** - The remedy for unprofitable **spiritual stargazing** lies in a Christian theology of history, an understanding of the order of events in the divine programme. First, Jesus returned to heaven (Ascension). Secondly, the Holy Spirit came (Pentecost). Thirdly, the church goes out to witness (Mission). Fourthly, Jesus will come back (Parousia). Whenever we forget one of these events, or put them in the wrong sequence, confusion reigns. We need especially to remember that between the ascension and the Parousia, the disappearance and the reappearance of Jesus, there stretches a period of unknown length which is to be filled with the church's world-wide, Spirit-empowered witness to him. We need to hear the implied message of the angels: 'You have seen him go. You will see him come. But between that going and coming there must be another. The Spirit must come, and you must go—into the world for Christ.' ([The Message of Acts](#))

**Acts 1:11** They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

KJV Acts 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

- **Men of Galilee** Acts 2:7; 13:31; Mark 14:70
- **why do you stand looking into the sky?** Acts 3:12; Luke 24:5
- **will come in just the same way** Daniel 7:13,14; Mt 24:30; 25:31; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27; John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 1:7
- Acts Videos - [Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:3-11 Doing Jesus' Work](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:1-11 How to Finish Christ's Work](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:6-11 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--2](#) - John MacArthur

## ANGELS GIVE PROPHECY OF JESUS' SECOND COMING

**Men of Galilee** - All of the apostles (with the exception of Judas) were from the region of Galilee (cf Acts 2:7, Acts 13:31). Recall that Galilee was a region regarded with derision by residents of Judea, in part because many of the people of Galilee were Gentiles. **Utley** adds that Galilee "was not as "kosher" (i.e. strict) in its performance of the Oral Traditions (Talmud)." The low esteem of these Galileans reminds me of Paul's words...

For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world (GALILEANS! cf Acts 4:13-+, 2 Cor 4:7-+) to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, 28 and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, 29 so that no man may boast before God. (1 Cor 1:26-29)

**Lenski** adds an interesting thought that they are addressed as **men of Galilee** because it would serve to "bring back to them in a flash their long and blessed association with Jesus, especially in Galilee."

**Moody Bible Commentary** - This promise (Acts 1:11) is pivotal for a proper understanding of the second coming. [Preterists](#) believe that the second coming has already taken place in AD 70. According to this view, Jesus' return to earth was not physical but rather a return in judgment against Israel and Jerusalem. In light of Acts 1:11, however, the preterist view is untenable. Jesus will descend **visibly, physically, and literally** to the Mount of Olives, parallel to how He ascended (see the comments on Zech 14:1–5). The ascension gives assurance of God's approval of Christ's life and work and the certainty of His second coming.

**Why do you stand looking into the sky** - This does seem to be a mild rebuke, but who would not be steadily gazing, eyes transfixed on the sky from which Jesus had just disappeared? But the question does serve to focus their attention back on the fact that Jesus would return. It is interesting that the NT mentions the Second Coming directly or indirectly in about 1 in every 20-25 passages. Clearly, the Spirit of Christ, wants to keep His glorious return on our radar screen. Indeed, if we are daily looking for Him, we are far more likely to be daily living for Him! So here the angels give the apostles a glorious promise that though they do not see

him for the moment, they will surely see Him again. And this is indeed every disciples' "blessed hope...the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (Titus 2:13-+), a "hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered (ASCENDED) as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." (Heb 6:19-20-+).

The uncertainty of His certain return serves as a powerful motive for Spirit empowered living and serving. Paul alludes to this in Romans exhorting the saints

Do this (What? see Ro 13:10), knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation (future tense salvation = glorification) is nearer to us than when we believed (WHEN WE WERE JUSTIFIED = PAST TENSE SALVATION). The night (THIS GODLESS WORLD SYSTEM RULED BY THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS) is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy (THIS EXHORTATION SPEAKS OF PRESENT TENSE SALVATION = SANCTIFICATION). But **put on** the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision** (STOP DOING THIS!) for the flesh in regard to its lusts (STRONG, GODLESS DESIRES FOR GRATIFICATION). (Ro 13:11-14-+)

Writing to the Corinthians Paul reminded them

Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must **ALL** appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that EACH ONE may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad (NOT SPEAKING OF SINS FOR THOSE HAVE BEEN PAID FOR IN FULL BY JESUS- SPEAKING OF DEEDS WHICH ARE WORTHLESS - SEE [Good Deeds](#)). (2 Cor 5:9-10-+)

And in the last chapter of the Bible Jesus speaks of His Second Coming and it will be a time of recompense to His faithful witnesses working in the fields which are white unto harvest...

"Behold, I am coming quickly, and **My reward is with Me**, to render to every man according to what he has done (cf [Good Deeds](#)). (Revelation 22:12-+)

Jesus warned His disciples and all of us...

"We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; **night is coming when no one can work**. (John 9:4)

**Guzik** - The two men (apparently angels) told the disciples to put their attention in the right place (obedience to Jesus' command to return to Jerusalem), not in wondering where and how Jesus went. Jesus told them to go to the ends of the earth, and they stood gazing up into heaven. ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**Looking** (present tense)(991)(**blepo**) basically means to have sight, to see, to look at, then to observe, to discern, to perceive with the eye, and frequently implies special contemplation. **Blepo** indicates greater vividness than **horao**, a similar verb meaning "to see", for according to Vine **blepo** expresses "a more intentional, earnest contemplation. in Luke 6:41, of beholding the mote in a brother's eye; Luke 24:12, of beholding the linen clothes in the empty tomb; Acts 1:9, of the gaze of the disciples when the Lord ascended." **Robertson** adds that "the present participle accents the fact that they were **looking** directly at Jesus."

## THE PROMISE OF A WONDERFUL REUNION!

**This Jesus** - "This **same** Jesus" = "this very One Who is known by this His personal name and described by the act just witnessed, He shall return." (Lenski)

**Guzik** writes that "**this same Jesus**" "is a glorious phrase. It reminds us that the Jesus ascended to heaven and seated at the right hand of God the Father is the **same** Jesus of the Gospels. He is the **same** Jesus of love, grace, goodness, wisdom, and care." ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**POSB** - This "**same Jesus**" is the One who will come back. He will not be different, either in Person or in attitude. He will be the same. He will be the same Jesus, the same Lord and Savior, the same One who came to earth to save men. He will be the same Jesus in attitude, still loving and caring for those who follow Him. He will be the same Jesus who promised to return and receive believers unto Himself that they may be with Him where He is (John 14:2-3). (The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Acts)



Have you ever pondered the thought that when Jesus was lifted up to heaven in the cloud, it was His post-resurrection physical body that was lifted up? It was His body that included the scars from His crucifixion (cf Jn 20:25, 27, cf Lk 24:30, 31, 39-+). And so today there is a Man with scars in heaven seated at the right hand of God the Father. Those scars will forever identify Him as "**this same Jesus!**" (cf Rev 5:6 = "as if slain" - see [±](#)).

**Who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven-**

Note that the angels give no date for the Second Coming but only that His return would be like His departure. In the Revelation John writes " BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen." (Rev 1:7-[±](#))

**Lenski** - He departed visibly, he shall return visibly; he went to heaven, he shall come from heaven; he went away bodily, he shall come back bodily. It is not added that he will return in all his glory with all the angels of God about him for the final judgment, although Jesus had given these additions. It is not added that every eye shall see him when he returns, also those who pierced him, Rev. 1:7.

Jesus will return in His glorified body, accompanied with clouds (cf. Da 7:13-+; Mt 24:30-+; Mt 26:64; Rev. 1:7-[±](#); Rev 14:14-[±](#))

Jesus was received into the cloud from **the mount of Olivet** (Acts 1:12). The prophet Zechariah describes His return...

**In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives** which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. (Zechariah 14:4-+)

**Barclay** writes that "The Second Coming is not a matter for speculation and for illegitimate curiosity; it is a summons to make ourselves ready for that day when it comes."

**Spurgeon** - Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up into heaven? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you have seen him going into heaven." Four great events shine out brightly in our Savior's story. All Christian minds delight to dwell on his birth, his death, his resurrection, and his ascension. These make four rungs in that ladder of light, the foot of which is on the earth, but the top reaches to heaven. As for his ascension, he could not a second time descend if he had not first ascended. But having perfumed heaven with his presence and prepared a place for his people, we may rightly expect that he will come again and receive us to himself, that where he is there we may be also.

**Craig Keener** - Moses had passed on his work to Joshua, Elijah to Elisha, and rabbis and philosophers to their disciples. This model of succession created occasional "succession narratives" that described the passing on of a teacher's call. Jesus' ascension immediately after the commission of 1:8 leaves believers as his successors, responsible for the job of world evangelization, until his return in the same glorified body (Acts 1:11). (IVP Bible Background Commentary)

**Guzik** sums up Jesus ascension as a preview of His return...**Jesus will return just as He left.**

- He left physically and will so come in like manner.
- He left visibly and will so come in like manner.
- He left from the Mount of Olives and will so come in like manner.
- He left in the presence of His disciples and will so come in like manner.
- He left blessing His church and will so come in like manner. ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

---

**J B Lightfoot** - The angels' address is a rebuke to idle speculation in regions beyond the reach of human knowledge. It is a warning against substituting that which is visionary for that which is real in religion.

[But] aren't we told that our citizenship is in heaven? Aren't we commanded to store up treasure in heaven? In what sense then can we be required to avert our gaze from heaven and to fix our eyes on the earth?

The circumstances of the apostles will supply us with a first answer. What was a fault in them will be a fault in us also. They were eager to know the exact time—the day and the hour—when their King would come and claim his kingdom. He had told them again and again that this knowledge was hidden from them. It was hidden even from the angels of heaven. And still, the last words that they address to their risen Lord ignore the warning; still the last answer that they receive from his lips is a rebuke for desiring to fathom the unfathomable. "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set."

The subject has exercised a strong fascination over Christians in all ages. Again and again people have predicted the time of the Second Advent. Again and again their predictions have been falsified.

And the wrong done by this lawless speculation is not trifling. It impairs that attitude of patient waiting that is enjoined on the church. It substitutes a spasmodic, feverish watchfulness for the calm and continuous expectation that suits the children of God. It is chargeable with still more fatal consequences than these. It has bred disappointment, and from disappointment has sprung

skepticism and from skepticism, mockery and unbelief. It has given occasion to the enemies of Christ to blaspheme. And the guilt lies in no small degree with the speculation of believers. Strange that it should have been so; strange that people should not perceive how each such prediction falsified is a confirmation of the Master's saying, "No one knows about that day or hour." Spend no more time on speculations; they only absorb energy and paralyze action. Stand no more gazing up into heaven, but return from the mount of ascension to your everyday life. There, continue in prayer and supplication; there await in confidence that outpouring of the Spirit; there live and bear witness to Christ. ("Christ's Gift of Peace," in Sermons in St. Paul's Cathedral )

---

## **Acts 1:1-14**

### **Perhaps Today!**

By Dennis J. De Haan

This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go. —Acts 1:11

As we approach a new millennium, many Christians speak of the "soon return of Christ" as if it will happen in their lifetime. And it may!

Down through history, people have predicted specific days, months, and years for Christ's return. The founder of one sect predicted October 22, 1886. Another leader set 1933 as the end of this age. And another predicted that Christ will come in 2005, saying that we can know the "nearness" but not the "exactness."

The dismal record of date-setters has led many to abandon the subject altogether. Andrew Bonar told of a Scottish man who loved the truth of Jesus' personal return. After living in Edinburgh for a time and returning to his village, his neighbors asked him how he liked the Edinburgh preachers. "They all fly on one wing," he said. "They all preach Christ's first coming but not His second coming."

We will miss the purifying effect that comes from thinking about the Lord's return if we avoid the subject entirely or if we set a date (1 Jn. 3:2-3). But if we watch and pray (Mk. 13:33) and live a holy life (Lk. 21:34), we will be ready at all times.

The message of the Bible is clear: Be ready! Jesus could return at any moment—perhaps today! [Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Look for Christ's return and you'll live for Christ's glory.

---

### **Why Did He Leave?**

By Herbert Vander Lugt

Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven. —Acts 1:11

As a young boy, I loved the story of Jesus ascending into heaven. I visualized Him slowly rising above the earth with hands outstretched in blessing. I remember wondering why He went up visibly instead of instantly disappearing as He had done at other times after His resurrection. I also wondered where heaven is located and what Jesus is doing there now.

Why did Jesus ascend visibly? Perhaps to show that His earthly ministry was completed and that He would no longer be seen by His disciples. He had paid the price for sin (Romans 5:8), defeated Satan (Hebrews 2:14), and broken the power of death (Revelation 1:18). He had given His followers all the evidence and instruction they needed to live for Him (Acts 1:1-3).

What did He ascend to do? To give "gifts to men" (Ephesians 4:8), to send the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), to be our Intercessor (Romans 8:34) and Advocate (1 John 2:1), and to take up His role as Head of the church (Ephesians 1:20-23).

Where is heaven? I once thought of it as a place millions of miles away in outer space. Now I think of it as a realm near at hand but undetectable. I know Jesus is there, and someday I'll be there too. This fills my heart with gratitude and praise. How wonderful that we have an ascended Savior! [Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

To the Father Christ ascended,

For His work on earth had ended;

Now in heaven interceding

By His Spirit He is leading. —Sper

The work Jesus accomplished for us the Spirit now accomplishes in us.

**Acts 1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.**

KJV Acts 1:12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

- **Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet** Zechariah 14:4; Mt 21:1; 24:3; 26:30; Luke 21:37; 24:52
- **Sabbath day's journey away** Luke 24:50; John 11:18
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur

## OBEYING JESUS' ORDERS

**Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet** - Remember Jesus had given them "**orders**" not suggestions (Acts 1:2-+). And without hesitation they obeyed Jesus' instructions return and **wait** for the Spirit (Lk 24:49+, Acts 1:4-+) and not leave Jerusalem even though it was a dangerous place for Christ followers. There is a powerful principle here -- They obeyed and their obedience was rewarded with the coming of the Spirit in Acts 2. Now just for a moment, ask yourself, what if they had disobeyed? Would they have had an encounter with the Spirit? I realize this question is speculative, but it is a question we can apply to our lives. What happens we receive **orders** from God (there are hundreds of commands in the NT) and we say "Maybe later Lord." (Delayed obedience is disobedience!) Or we say "No I'll do it my way." Or even worse we allow Sin to reign in our mortal body that we might obey its lusts (Ro 6:12-+). What do you think will be the effect on any encounter with the Holy Spirit? The answer is obvious -- when we disobey God, we grieve and/or quench the Spirit, in effect throwing water of the "fire" of the Spirit. And then we wonder why we are frustrated with our Christian life. Is there some **order** from God which you have disobeyed, perhaps even repeatedly? Then do not expect the provision of supernatural power from the Spirit! Ask God to search your heart (Ps 139:23-24) and when He reveals your point of departure from the "highway of holiness," confess the sin specifically and repent and obey. Obedience is the way of blessing, including the blessing of filling and controlling by the Holy Spirit. Too many saints are living more like ain'ts, trying to live the **CHRIST**ian life without **CHRIST**, without the Spirit of Christ Who Alone can enable a victorious walk in Christ.

**Warren Wiersbe** commented on the gathered believers in Acts 1 and Acts 2 quipping that the gathering of the believers of Acts 1 could be called "The Church of the Closed Door." The description is that of the average church today: enjoying fellowship, praying, searching the Scriptures, and electing officers. But when the Holy Spirit filled the believers on the Day of Pentecost, the doors were opened and God's church began to impact the city and the world. To see the difference the Holy Spirit makes when he empowers God's people, compare Acts 1:12-26 with Acts 2:42-47. (Dynamics of Preaching)

**Paul Apple** aptly comments on the unhesitating obedience of the apostles - Submitting to God's agenda and timetable for your life will end up being a strategic place for the ministry that God has customized for you.

**The mount called Olivet** ([Mount of Olives](#), some [modern pictures](#)) - This mountain is really more like a hill that lies across the [Kidron Valley](#) to the east of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount area. The Mount of Olives is about 2,710 ft elevation (some 400 feet above the [Kidron Valley](#)) and so is about 280 feet higher than the Temple Mount (elevation = 2,430 ft) and about 226 feet above the city of Jerusalem (2,474 ft), so it overlooks both the city and the Temple complex. When Luke described the ascension from [Bethany](#) in the Gospel (Lk 24:50-51+) and here from the mount called Olivet, there is no discrepancy if the ascension was from the backside of the Mount, near but not actually in the little [village of Bethany](#) which is near the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.

**Utley on mount called Olivet** - This seems to contradict Luke 24:50+ (i.e. Bethany); however, compare Luke 19:29+ and Lk 21:37+ with Mark 11:11-12 and 14:3. The ridge known as the Mt. of Olives was a 2.5 mile ridge about 300-400 feet above Jerusalem that ran from Bethany opposite the Kidron Valley, across from the Temple.

**Returned** (5290) ([hupostrepho](#) from **hupo** = under + **strepho** = to turn, to change) means to turn back from or to return (go back to a location).

One wonders if the description of the departure of the [Shekinah glory cloud](#) of the LORD in Ezekiel went through the minds of the apostles as they returned to Jerusalem. Recall that the [Mount of Olives](#) was the place from which he had departed from Solomon's Temple prior to the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar.

Then the cherubim lifted up their wings with the wheels beside them, and the [\(Shekinah\) glory](#) of the God of Israel hovered over them. 23 The [\(Shekinah\) glory](#) of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood over **the mountain which is east of the city** (MOUNT OF OLIVES). (Ezekiel 11:22-23).

**Comment:** See diagram describing the progressive departure of the glory of the LORD. So here again the glory is leaving from the Mount of Olives. But this time the two men reassure that the glory of the Lord will return to the Mount of Olives and to His Temple in Jerusalem (See God's Plan for Jerusalem). It is interesting to note the parallels between the departure of the glory in Ezekiel followed by destruction of Solomon's Temple in 586 BC and the departure of the glory (cf 1 Ti 3:16) of Jesus followed by the destruction of Herod's Temple in 70 AD by the Romans, both being a manifestation of the so-called "[Times of the Gentiles](#)," (Lk 21:24+).

**Anderson** adds "The apostles had asked if He would restore the kingdom, but Calvary represented the rejection of that kingdom by the people, and thus once again God's glory in Christ was departing from the mountain on the east of the city."

**Anderson** - Three times the NT records that the Lord shed tears, each time on the [mount of Olives](#). It was there that He wept over Jerusalem as He passed over the top of the mount to descend for His last Passover, and gazed down upon the city lying at His feet (Luke 19:41+). It was on its eastern slopes that Bethany was situated, and in a tomb outside that village Lazarus was buried, and "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). On the western slopes there was a garden, the garden of Gethsemane in which He "offered up ... strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death" (Heb 5:7). But the place of His tears became the place of His triumph; from the place where three times He shed tears, He was taken up into heaven. (What the Bible teaches - Acts)

In his Gospel Luke records the reaction of the apostles to Jesus' ascension and the promise of His future return "And they, after worshiping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy." (Lk 24:52+). Their Master and Friend departs and yet paradoxically they are filled with **joy**, even **great** (mega) **joy**! Why? How? Clearly their **joy** was a reflection of the fruit of the Spirit (even though they were not yet filled with His presence) Who gives joy (Gal 5:22+). But also their **joy** had a firm foundation of truth, truth that Jesus would return, that they would see Him again some day. In short they had joy because they had hope, hope not like the world's "hope so," but divine hope, a "hope sure." And their great hope is every believer's great hope, regardless of how "hopeless" their current circumstances are! This interrelationship of joy, hope and the Spirit reminds me of Paul's wonderful prayer in Romans

Now may the God of **hope** fill you with all **joy** and peace in believing, so that you will **abound in hope** by the **power of the Holy Spirit**. (Ro 15:13+)

**A Sabbath's day journey away** - A Sabbath day's journey would have been the maximum distance a person could travel on the Sabbath without being "guilty" of performing work on the Sabbath which was to be a day of rest. Luke is not saying the Ascension was on the Sabbath but is only using this term which equated with about 2000 cubits (cf Josh 3:4), and which is about one-half to three-quarters of a mile.

**Paul Apple** summarizes the application of Acts 1:9-12 to the apostles and to us - (1) **Commanded** to wait for empowerment – Holy Spirit power is key (2) **Corrected** regarding nature and focus of our mission – Worldwide evangelism (3) **Communicated** urgency and ultimate success – Get busy; Jesus is coming back!

**Cornerstone Bible Commentary** on a **Sabbath's day journey** - This was two thousand cubit....The rabbis ingeniously calculated this distance by interpreting Exodus 16:29 in the light of Numbers 35:5. Josephus placed the Mount of Olives at five or six stadia (960–1,152 meters, a stadion is 192 meters; Antiquities 20.169; War 5.70) from Jerusalem.

**John MacArthur** adds that according to tradition, a **Sabbath's day journey** is derived "from Israel's encampments during the forty years of wilderness wanderings. The farthest tents were held to have been 2,000 cubits from the tabernacle, although Scripture nowhere specifies that distance. Since work was prohibited on the Sabbath, the farthest anyone would need to travel was the 2,000 cubits to the tabernacle to worship. Consequently, a **Sabbath day's journey** became synonymous with 2,000 cubits."

**William Larkin** - The fact that the Great Commission is the last instruction of the risen, now ascended and imminently returning Lord gives it great weight. He is not mentioning an optional ministry activity for individuals with cross-cultural interests and churches with surplus funds. The Great Commission is the primary task the Lord left his church. The church must always be a missionary church; the Christian must always be a world Christian.

**Acts 1:13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.**

KJV Acts 1:13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Mt, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

- **When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying** Acts 9:37-39; 20:8; Mark 14:15; Luke 22:12
- **Peter** Acts 2:14,38; 3:1-10; 4:13,19; 8:14-25; 9:32-43; 10:9-33; 12:2,3; 15:7-11; Mt 4:18-22; 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-18; 5:37; 9:2; 14:33; Luke 6:13-16; John 1:40-42; 13:23-25; 18:17,25-27; 21:15-24; 1 John 1:1-5; 2 John 1:1-13; 3 John 1:1-14; Revelation 1:1-3
- **Philip** John 1:43-46; 6:5-7; 12:21,22; 14:8,9
- **Thomas** John 11:16; 20:26-29; 21:2
- **Matthew** Mt 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27-29
- **James** Acts 12:17; 15:13; 1 Cor 15:7; Gal 1:19; 2:9; James 1:1 Mk 2:14; 3:18
- **Simon** Mt 10:4; Mark 3:18 Luke 6:15
- **Judas** Mt 10:3, Also called Lebbaeus whose surname was Thaddaeus Mt 10:3KJV Mark 3:18, Jude 1:1
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur

**When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying**- Upper room is modified by the definite article so it was a specific room, possibly the same one they shared the Last Supper with Jesus, but we cannot be definitive as discussed below. Some writers have suggested this room was in the house of John Mark's mother (cf. Acts 12:12), but that is only speculative. We can feel sure the room was in a house within the city walls, for a Sabbath's day journey would have brought them from the Mount of Olives into the inner city.

An **upper room** would give privacy (cf as Jesus had experienced when He went up on the mountain - Lk 9:37) and provide an ideal place for their prayer meeting. Their retiring to the upper room reminds of Daniel in Da 6:10-+ "Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber [Lxx = same word as Acts 1:13 = huperoon] he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously."

In Luke 22:12 Jesus described a "large, furnished **upper room** (anagaion - also in Mk 14:15, not used in Lxx)" but Luke uses a different word here in Acts for **upper room**, the Greek noun **huperon**, so we cannot be definitive as to whether this room was the site of both these great Biblical events. Many writers think it is the same room.

**Upper room** (5253) (**huperoon** from **huperos** = upper, over) means an upper story or room upstairs, an upper chamber. Thayer adds that huperos is a room in the upper part of a house, sometimes built upon the flat roof of the house (2 Kings 23:12), whither Orientals were accustomed to retire in order to sup, meditate, pray, etc."

**Vincent** - With the article (**Ed: "the specific upper room"** is the idea), denoting some well-known place of resort. It was the name given to the room directly under the flat roof. Such rooms were often set apart as halls for meetings. In such an apartment Paul delivered his farewell address at Troas (Acts 20:8), and the body of Dorcas was laid (Acts 9:37). Used by Luke only.

**Gilbrant** on **huperoon** - This is a commonly used word in both literary and nonliterary (e.g., papyri) sources. The term denotes upper chambers such as those belonging to women. (In Greek homes the women's quarters were upstairs and the men's, downstairs.) The New Testament uses huperōon four times, all in Acts (1:13; 9:37,39; 20:8). The first of these references denotes the upper chamber where the apostles stayed while waiting for the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The second and third occurrences (9:37,39) refer to the room in which Dorcas was raised from the dead. The last reference is to the room where Christians met to hear Paul preach at Troas. This huperōon was high enough to cause Eutychus' death when he fell from the chamber. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Huperoon** - 4x in 4v - Acts 1:13; Acts 9:37; Acts 9:39; Acts 20:8



**Huperoon** - 28x in 28v in the Septuagint -

Jdg. 3:20; Jdg. 3:23; Jdg. 3:24; Jdg. 3:25; 2 Sam. 18:33; 1 Ki. 17:19; 1 Ki. 17:23; 2 Ki. 1:2; 2 Ki. 4:10; 2 Ki. 4:11; 2 Ki. 23:12; 1 Chr. 28:11; 2 Chr. 3:9; Ps. 104:3; Ps. 104:13; Jer. 22:13; Jer. 22:14; Ezek. 41:7; Ezek. 42:5; Dan. 6:10

**Jack Arnold on upper room** - There was an "upper room" in almost all the homes in the city of Jerusalem, especially in the homes of the wealthy and prominent. It was a large room used for religious gatherings (prayer and devotion), family gatherings and it was the place the dead were laid before burial for viewing (Acts 9:36, 37; 20:7, 8). It may have been like our modern day basement or recreation room. ([Acts - 10 Day Until Zero Hour](#))

**Longnecker on upper room** - Upper rooms in Palestinian cities were usually the choicest rooms because they were above the tumult of the crowded streets and beyond the prying eyes of passersby. For the wealthy, the upper room was the living room. Sometimes upper rooms were rented out. Often they served as places of assembly, study, and prayer (cf. Str-B, 2.594)....The use of the definite article in speaking of "the [upper] room" (to hyperōon) and the emphatic place these words have at the beginning of the clause suggest that the room was well known to the early Christians.

**Where they were staying** - Staying is in the imperfect tense giving the sense of abiding permanently and indicating this was the "headquarters" so to speak of these first believers. **Robertson** feels "This could mean constant residence, but most likely frequent resort for prayer during these days, some being on hand all the time as they came and went."

**Cornerstone Bible Commentary** - Because of differences in vocabulary, it is difficult to identify this place with the site of the Last Supper (Luke 22:11–13), the Resurrection appearances (Luke 24:36), or John Mark's mother Mary's house (Acts 12:12).

**Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James** (Thaddaeus in Mt 10:3, Mk 3:18) - In the various lists of the apostles note that Peter is always mentioned first and Judas Iscariot is always last (only mentioned in the 3 Gospel lists). The next four names are also always the same, but the order of the names differs. For more on the list of apostles see [A T Robertson's note](#) and [MacArthur's sermons](#).

**Related Resource:**

- [Chart of the Apostles Names](#)

The apostles have been divided by some writers into 3 groups -

1. First Group - **Peter and John and James and Andrew**
2. Second Group - **Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew**
3. Third Group - **James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James** (Judas Iscariot in the lists in the Gospels)

**Peter** ([4074](#)) (**Petros**; Latin = Petrus) is a masculine proper noun which means a "stone" and generally a smaller stone than the feminine form **petra** which refers to a massive rock or a foundation boulder (eg Mt 7:24+). **Peter** is the Greek equivalent of the Syriac or Aramaic name **Cephas** (*Kephas* from Aramaic *kay fah*) which was assigned to Simon by Jesus. "Most Jews of Galilee had both a Jewish name (e.g. Simon or Simeon, meaning "hearing") and a Greek name (which is never given). Jesus nicknames him "rock." In Greek it is petros and in Aramaic it is cephas (cf. John 1:42; Matt. 16:16)." (Uteley) **Peter** was not always a model of rock-like (**petros** is a symbol of imperturbability as determined from used in Greek literature) firmness. Note for example his actions in Gethsemane, his denial three times of Christ, his unsuccessful attempt at walking on water and his conduct at Antioch (Gal 2:11-21+) where he is called **Cephas**. Despite all this **Peter** was clearly the leader of Jesus' disciples, the spokesman for the Twelve and one of the three closest to Jesus.

**William Arnot** - **Peter** is restored, and his backsliding healed; **Thomas** is confirmed, and believes, although he no longer sees. We have here what in modern phraseology would be termed the minutes and the [sederunt](#) (a prolonged sitting as for discussion) of the first missionary meeting.

Here is a list of the 12 apostles in Matthew 10:2-4

Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-gatherer; James the son of Alphaeus, and **Thaddaeus**; 4 Simon the Zealot ("the Canaanite"), and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.



**Comment: Thaddaeus** (means beloved child) is also called Judas (Luke 6:16 "Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor."), and Bartholomew is probably the same as Nathaniel (John 1:45-49) Simon the Canaanite (as in KJV = Mt 10:4KJV, Mk 3:18KJV) is elsewhere called Simon the Zealot. It is also worth noting that the twelve are called both "disciples" ("learners," or "followers") and "apostles" (sent ones, possibly equivalent in essence to missionaries). Although all believers should be disciples of Christ, these are called the twelve apostles because they were taught directly by Jesus.

Here is the list of the 12 apostles in Luke 6:13-16+

And when day came, He called His disciples to Him; and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles: 14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James and John; and Philip and Bartholomew; 15 and Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot ("the Canaanite"); 16 Judas the son of James (Thaddaeus), and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Here is the list in Mark 3:16-19

And He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter), 17 and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder"); 18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus (Judas the son of James), and Simon the Zealot ("the Canaanite"); 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him.

This **James the son of Alphaeus** is different than the half-brother of Christ who wrote the book of James (James 1:1). **James the son of Alphaeus** is also called "the Less" or "James the Lesser" to differentiate him from others named James. **James** the son of Zebedee is always listed in the first group of 4 apostles. We know absolutely nothing about **James, the son of Alphaeus**, but his name.

**Simon the Zealot** - Recall that Peter's name was Simon Peter and thus this Simon is distinguished by being designated as "Simon the Canaanite" in Mt 10:4KJV and Mk 3:18KJV. Luke, here and in Luke 6:15-+, uses the Greek term **Zealot** ([zelotes](#)), the equivalent of the term "Cananaean," a resident of Cana. Robertson suggests that **Simon** is called here by the epithet **Zelotes** "the Greek equivalent of the Aramaic word because Luke has Gentiles in mind." It is uncertain whether Simon was given this title because he was an active member of the Zealot party or because he had a generally zealous nature.

The Zealots were a religious party dedicated to the forcible overthrow of Roman rule in the name of the Law of Moses. They took their name from the movement led by Mattathias and his sons-the Maccabees-which overthrew the Seleucids after Antiochus Epiphanes had desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig and setting up statues of Greek gods in the sanctuary. They also looked back to Phinehas who showed zeal in fighting for the honor of the Lord in the wilderness (Nu 25.11). The Zealot party, one of four distinct parties among the Jews mentioned by Josephus the historian (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots), was founded by Judas the Galilean, who led a revolt against Rome in AD. 6. The Zealots opposed paying tribute to Rome in any form, for such payment was an overt denial that God alone was the ruler of Israel. Although the revolt of AD 6 was crushed, the spirit of revolt festered with many violent incidents until full-scale war against Rome broke out in AD 66. The Zealots were active throughout the war and after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 retreated to their desert stronghold on the wilderness heights overlooking the Dead Sea. From this fortress, called Masada, they continued to wage a guerrilla war; Masada itself fell after a long siege in AD 73.

**Zealous** ([2207](#)) (**zelotes** from **zeo** = to boil, be hot or glow) describes one zealous (fervent and enthusiastically devoted) for or eagerly desirous of something. A zelotes is one who is earnestly committed to a side or cause and thus could be described as an enthusiast, an adherent, or a loyalist. **Zealous** (English) - marked by active interest and enthusiasm; filled with or inspired by intense enthusiasm or zeal; ardent; fervent; marked by fervent partisanship for a person, a cause, or an ideal; full of great energy, effort, and enthusiasm, especially in your political or religious ideas.

The epithet (member of the party of Zealots) clung to Simon after he became an apostle and distinguishes him from Simon Peter. See Vol. I on the Gospel of Matthew for discussion of the four lists of the apostles.

**A T Robertson** - Judas the son of James - Literally, Judas of James, whether son or brother (cf. Jude 1) we do not really know. "Of James" is added to distinguish him from Judas Iscariot (Jn 14:22). However we take it, he must be identified with the Thaddaeus (= Lebbaeus) of Mark 3:18 and Matthew 10:3 to make the list in the third group identical. No name appears in Acts for that of Judas Iscariot.

**Related Resources: John MacArthur has sermons on all of the apostles.**

- [Luke 6:12-13 Common Men, Uncommon Calling](#)

- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Peter, Part 1](#)
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Peter, Part 2](#)
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Peter, Part 3](#)
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Andrew and James](#)
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: John](#)
- [Luke 6:15 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Matthew and Thomas](#)
- [Luke 6:16 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Judas Iscariot, Part 1](#)
- [Luke 6:16 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Judas Iscariot, Part 2](#)
- [Luke 6:15-16 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: James, Simon, and Judas](#)
- [Matthew 10:2 The Master's Men Andrew, James Son of Zebedee, John](#)
- [Matthew 10:3 The Master's Men, Philip and Bartholomew](#)
- [Matthew 10:3b The Master's Men, Matthew and Thomas](#)
- [Matthew 10:3-4 The Master's Men James Son of Alphaeus, Simon Zealot](#)
- [Matthew 10:4 The Master's Men, Part 5: Judas Iscariot](#)
- [Chart of the Apostles Names](#)

**ILLUSTRATION** - R. C. Sproul told an interesting story of a minister who was talking with a parishioner at a church picnic, who rarely came to church and rarely got involved in anything. The minister questioned him on why he wasn't in church faithfully and the answer he got was, "I really don't need the church because my faith is personal and private and I worship God on my own." The minister walked over to the grill and took one piece of charcoal off the pile with a pair of tongs and set it off by itself. Within a matter of minutes that one piece of charcoal had lost its heat and its ability to do what it was supposed to do. The rest of the burning coals were getting the job done, but the isolated coal accomplished nothing (Acts, p. 33). You and I need the corporate support of each other that comes through the church. We need corporate fellowship. We need to pray as a group and study as a group if we are to accomplish what God wants us to accomplish. Go out on your own and you will probably fall flat on your face. But link yourself to the group who loves the Lord and the Word of God and you can burn bright for God. That point is seen right here in this first part of the book of Acts.

**Acts 1:14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.**

KJV Acts 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

- all Acts 2:1,42,46; 4:24-31; 6:4; Mt 18:19,20; 21:22; Luke 11:13; 18:1; 24:53; Ephesians 6:18
- with the Mt 27:55; Mark 15:40; 16:1; Luke 8:2,3; 23:49,55; 24:10; John 19:25
- Mary John 19:25,26
- with his Mt 13:55,56; Mark 3:31-35
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:12-14 Unleashing the Power of United Prayer](#) - Ray Pritchard

## **ALL OF ONE MIND IN A "PRAYER CONCERT"**

**Steven Cole** - Waiting on the Lord is one of the hardest things to learn in the Christian life. Why doesn't God hurry up? Life is short enough as it is! But so often the Lord says, "Wait!" We need to learn to obey Him. The apostles' obedience shows us that they were not self-willed men, trying to build their own empires. We can trust their witness. What did they do while they waited? They devoted themselves to prayer. What were they praying for? We are not told.

**These all with one mind** - This phrase presents us with an incredible picture of these men and women who had their hearts knit together for a common cause. And surely this was a supernatural unity for there were men here with very strong personalities and very different temperaments, and yet they were of one mind. Amazing! O to have been in this 10 day prayer meeting and to have experienced the bliss of this beautiful [camaraderie](#), surely wrought by the Spirit even though He had not come upon them yet.

Luke's Gospel adds another detail that "were continually in the temple praising God." (Lk 24:53+), which shows they had become more courageous after seeing Jesus (cf John 20:19 p = "the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews"). So they were **praising** and **praying** (Acts 1:14) over the next 10 days. "It was a healthy combination: continuous praise in the temple, and continuous prayer in the home." ([Stott - The Message of Acts](#)) Wouldn't you liked to have been there?

The consummate purpose of Christian unity is not to please other believers but to please the Lord, both inwardly and outwardly, individually and corporately. It is only when His people are in one accord and worship Him with one voice that they truly and fully glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And O how sweet are the prayers from saints who are of one mind!

**Warren Wiersbe** says the phrase **with one accord** " is a wonderful little statement. You find it at least six times in the Book of the Acts. In Acts 1:14, they were in one accord in supplication. Acts 2:1 says, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.? Here they were in **one accord in anticipation**. Acts 2:46 says, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart.? Here the church was in **one accord in continuation** - 'they continued together in serving the Lord. In Acts 4:24 we have the local church in prayer: "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God.? They were in **one accord in adoration**, worshiping and praising God and praying. In Acts 2:43 we read: "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch).? They were in **one accord in their association**; no divisions, no backbiting, no criticizing. Acts 15:25 contains another reference to "one accord?": "It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul.? They were in **one accord in their determination**. ([Something Happens When Churches Pray](#) -- Listen to a related [24 minute audio on this vital topic.](#))

**Godet** eloquently explains that "When one common aspiration reigns in the church, secondary diversities no longer separate hearts; and from the internal communion there results common adoration like pure harmony from a concert of well-tuned instruments. All hearts being melted in one, all mouths become only one. And how so? Because one Being only appears henceforth to all as worthy of being glorified." (The Epistle of St Paul to the Romans)

**David Guzik** - This is notable unity. When we saw the disciples in the Gospels, it seemed that they always fought and bickered. What had changed? Peter still had the history of denying the Lord; Matthew was still a tax collector (**Ed**: Albeit no longer actively engaged in that occupation); Simon was still a zealot. Their differences were still there, but the resurrected Jesus in their hearts was greater than any difference. ([Acts 1 Commentary](#)) (**Ed**: Cf Even as their eyes had literally been fixed on Jesus as He was lifted up in the cloud, now the eyes of their heart were fixed on Jesus and the hope of His calling. Cf Eph 1:18-19+, Heb 12:2+).

**William Arnot** - Every disciple helps or hinders his fellow-disciple. In all earnest times they that fear the Lord speak often one to another; and the Lord hearkens and hears when any company, great or small, agree to seek Him together. There was perseverance in the prayer of the primitive Church - "**they continued**." There was unity in those early prayer-meetings they prayed **with one accord**. The prayers were not soon broken off, and were not hindered by disagreements among the suppliants. They ascended straight to heaven in a pillar of pure incense, and descended soon in showers of blessings, great re freshing from the presence of the Lord.

**John Calvin** comments that Luke describes the "two essentials for true prayer, namely that they **persevered**, and were **of one mind**." Does this describe the prayer meetings at your church? Does your church even have a weekly prayer meeting? **Paul Apple** rightly exhorts us -- "Bathe Your Ministry Preparations in Corporate Prayer!"

**Stott** observes that "There can be little doubt that the grounds of this unity and perseverance in prayer were the command and promise of Jesus. He had promised to send them the Spirit soon (Acts 1:4, 5-±, Acts 1:8-±). He had commanded them to wait for him to come and then to begin their witness. **We learn, therefore, that God's promises do not render prayer superfluous. On the contrary, it is only his promises which give us the warrant to pray and the confidence that he will hear and answer.**" ([The Message of Acts](#)) (Bolding Added) (**Ed**: And I would add, there is nothing more powerful in prayer than praying God's Word back to Him, which is why it is a wonderful practice to pray with the Bible open, or your memory verses ready to be recited to God!)

Jamieson says they were "knit by a bond stronger than death."

**One mind** (3661) ([homothumadon/homothymadon](#) from **homos** = same + **thumos/thymos** = temperament) means with one mind, unity of mind, with one purpose, with unanimous consent, of one accord. In a word it means together (Webster says "**together**" means "in company, in union, in the same place, in the same time, in concert.") One lexicon says **homothumadon** means "to be of one soul." It speaks of an action agreed upon unanimously (with one impulse) or by common consent. **Homothumadon** was frequently used in secular settings to describe the unanimity of a synod, of creditors, of a husband and wife, of brother (TLNT, Moulton and Milligan) **Webster** defines **unanimity** as "Agreement of a number of persons in opinion or determination; as, there was perfect unanimity among the members of the council." Webster defines **accord** as "harmony of minds;

consent or concurrence of opinions or wills, harmony of sounds or the union of different sounds which are agreeable to one's ear in pitch and tone (See Pritchard's comment below).

You can mark it down that where there is **homothumadon** among believers, the Holy Spirit is present and active! (cf Eph 4:4-5, Acts 15:25, 28 where being of one mind clearly reflects the effects of the Holy Spirit). And the converse also applies - without the Holy Spirit energizes saints, uniting hearts, there is the potential for discord and disharmony because of our fallen flesh. "Harmonious" saints are surely Spirit filled saints!

**NIDNTT** writes that word homothumadon "is first found in the 5th and 4th cent. B.C. and in the political sphere is used especially for the visible, inner unity of a group faced by a common duty or danger. Their **unanimity** is not based on common personal feelings but on a **cause** greater than the individual." What a great description of the "**cause**" of Christ and His Commission to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth that lost souls might be saved forever! Is there a greater cause? I think not!

**Ray Pritchard** - The word is **homothumadon**, which the King James translates with the lovely phrase "**in one accord**." It's a musical term that means to strike the same notes together (**Ed**: More accurately it is the word "**accord**" which is the meaning of homothumadon which is a musical term. But Pritchard's application is still appropriate.). We all know what it is to listen to a choir sing and the music is lovely and lilting and then without warning, someone hits a wrong note. The discordant sound sticks out like a sore thumb. When the early church prayed, there were no "wrong notes"—no ugly attitudes, no pointing fingers, no pity parties, no gossipy stories, no secrets told behind closed doors. When people don't like each other, they can't pray together very long. Either you'll **stop criticizing** or you'll **stop praying** because you can't do both at the same time."

**Lawrence Richards'** descriptive definition echoes those of Pastor Pritchard - "**Homothumadon** is a compound of two words meaning to "rush along" (thumos/thymos) and "in unison" (homos). The image is almost musical; a number of notes are sounded which, while different, harmonize in pitch and tone. As the instruments of a great orchestra blend under the direction of a concertmaster, so the Holy Spirit blends together the lives of members of Christ's church. (The Teacher's Commentary)

So here is this little group of disciples meeting in dangerous Jerusalem. This is no accident, no coincidence. In fact, one cannot help but believe that this gathering in such a dangerous and with such palpable unanimity of mind and heart was an answer to Jesus' prayer to His Father just before He was crucified, when He prayed...

"And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; **that they may be one**, just as We are one."  
(John 17:22)

**Homothymadon** - Luke uses 10/11 NT occurrences and all in the book of Acts.

Acts 1:14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Acts 2:46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

Acts 4:24 And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, it is You who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM,

Acts 5:12 At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico.

Acts 7:57 But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse.

Acts 8:6 The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing.

Acts 12:20 Now he was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; and with one accord they came to him, and having won over Blastus the king's chamberlain, they were asking for peace, because their country was fed by the king's country.

Acts 15:25 it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

Acts 18:12 But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat,

Acts 19:29 The city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia.

Romans 15:6 so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ.

**Lawrence Richards** on use of *homothymadon* in Acts 1:14 - . There, in the Upper Room, the 11 disciples and a few women were united in prayer. Earlier strife and jealousies that marred their relationships were gone; the disciples were one, waiting for the Spirit's promised coming. (Ibid)

**David Peterson** - Luke's description of the activity of the apostles and those with them at this stage (**they all joined together constantly in prayer**) is quite emphatic in Greek (*houtoi pantes ēsan proskarterountes homothymadon tē proseuchē*). As they continually devoted themselves to prayer, they did so **together**(*homothymadon*), **as a fellowship of like-minded believers**. (Pillar NT Commentary) (Bolding added)

**Were continually devoting themselves to prayer** - They were "praying without ceasing." (1 Th 5:17+) While they were clearly praying fervently and with passion during these 10 days, their prayers in no way were instrumental in bringing about the coming of the Spirit. God had promised He would come on Pentecost and that is why He came on Pentecost. On the other hand, 10 days of devoted prayer prepared the soil of their hearts for the coming of the Spirit. It is much like saints today who pray Maranatha, "Our Lord Come." We know He will come, but even the act of praying for His sure return causes our hearts to desire that return and to live holy lives in light of His return.

A harmonious "concert of voices" to God. A veritable concert of prayer! In a real sense these believers were spiritually (praying, cf "stand in the gap" - Ezekiel 22:30) and literally "standing in the gap," because they were in the 10 day [gap](#) between Jesus' ascending and the Spirit descending.

**Jack Arnold** points out that "There is no way we can duplicate this tarrying experience of the disciples today. They were commanded to wait for the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. You and I do not live in the period between the ascension and Pentecost. We today do not wait for the Holy Spirit because He came two thousand years ago. We cannot tarry for the Holy Spirit and hope to reproduce a modern day Pentecost. Pentecost cannot and will not be repeated." ([Acts - 10 Day Until Zero Hour](#))

**Continually devoting** (present tense - continually)([4342](#))([proskartereo](#) from **prós** = toward, to + **karteréo** = be strong, steadfast, firm) means to be earnest towards, to persevere, and conveys the idea of "carrying on". It describes a steadfast single-minded fidelity to a certain course of action, in this case the act of prayer. It is notable that 6 of the 10 NT uses of *proskartereo* are associated with prayer!. The idea is persist steadfastly in a task, to keep on with devotion, to continue with intense effort, being continually attentive, persevering and not fainting, being constantly diligent, attending assiduously and continually! O to have such a prayer life that it could be modified by the verb *proskartereo*! Give us that quality of prayer life energized by Your Spirit Lord, in Jesus' Name. Amen.

**Vincent** on **proskartereo** - The verb is from *karteros*, strong, stanch, and means originally to persist obstinately in. In this sense here, and in Rom. 12:12; 13:6. Hence to adhere firmly to.

Note that most of the uses of **proskartereo** are by Luke in Acts - Observe what activities Luke associates with this verb...

Mk. 3:9; Acts 1:14; Acts 2:42; Acts 2:46; Acts 6:4; Acts 8:13; Acts 10:7; Rom. 12:12; Rom. 13:6; Col. 4:2

In Mark 3:9 we read "And He told His disciples that a boat **should stand ready** (*proskartereo*) for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him." The idea is that the boat was at the disposal of Jesus, near at hand. When one is praying with *proskartereo*, he or she is in a sense placing themselves "at the disposal of Jesus."

**Prayer** ([4335](#)) ([proseuche](#) from **pros** = toward or immediately before + **euchomai** = to pray or vow) is the more general word for prayer and is used only of prayer to God. The prefix **pros** would convey the sense of being immediately before Him and hence the ideas of adoration, devotion, and worship. The basic idea is to bring something, and in prayer this pertains to bringing up prayer requests. In early Greek culture an offering was brought with a prayer that it be accepted. Later the idea was changed slightly, so that the thing brought to God as an offering was the prayer itself.

**Luke's** uses of **proseuche** - Lk. 6:12; Lk. 19:46; Lk. 22:45; Acts 1:14; Acts 2:42; Acts 3:1; Acts 6:4; Acts 10:4; Acts 10:31; Acts 12:5; Acts 16:13; Acts 16:16. Note the concentration of prayer in the **early church!** (in the Book of Acts) What has happened to us as a church in America? How might this relate to how infrequently we see the power of the Lord at work in our midst?

**Lawrence Richards** writes that **proseuche** (verb *proseuchomai*) "In classical Greek was the technical term for calling on a deity. The NT transforms the classical stiffness into the warmth of genuine conversation. Such entreaty in the NT is addressed to God or Jesus and typically is both personal and specific." ([Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

Note that the **Greek Textus Receptus** has the Greek word *deesis* (which speaks of needs) and so the KJV reads "all continued with



one accord in prayer and **supplication** (deesis)." Modern Greek manuscripts do not support the presence of the word deesis.

**John Bunyan** said that "Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge to Satan.

#### Related Resources:

- [Colossians 1:9 Commentary](#)
- [Colossians 4:12 Commentary](#)
- [Devotional on Prayer](#)
- [Guide to Praying for Missionaries](#)
- [Pithy Prayer Phrases](#)
- [Prayer - Greek Words for Prayer](#)
- [Prayer Devotionals and Illustrations](#)
- [Prayer Hymns and Poems](#)
- [Prayer Quotes](#)
- [Prayer Quotes, Devotionals and Illustrations](#)
- [Praying His Word](#)
- [Praying in the Spirit](#)
- [Spurgeon's Gems on Prayer](#)

**Along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers** - The women may have included Mary Magdalene, Joanna, the wife of Chuza and Susanna (Lk 8:2, 3) "Shows the significant role that women played in the gospel ministry; they were present and involved and participating in a vital way right from the beginning." (Apple)

**Bob Utley on the women** - There was a group of women who traveled with and provided for Jesus and the Apostles (cf. Mt. 27:55–56; Mk 15:40–41; Luke 8:2; 23:49; and John 19:25).

#### Related Resources:

- [The Women Who Followed Jesus](#)
- [Women Who Traveled With Jesus and His Disciples](#)

**Mary the mother of Jesus** - It is interesting that this last NT mention of **Mary the mother of Jesus** is in the context of a prayer meeting, praying to God and NOT being prayed to! So Mary was obeying Jesus' orders and was awaiting the baptism by His Spirit at which time she would become part of the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13). **Robertson** adds this is "A delicate touch by Luke that shows Mary with her crown of glory at last. She had come out of the shadow of death with the song in her heart and with the realization of the angel's promise (Lk 1:26-33+) and the prophecy of Simeon (Lk 2:25, 29-33+). It was a blessed time for Mary"

**John MacArthur** notes that "The unbiblical elevation of Mary has its roots in paganism, some of it dating back to the tower of Babel and Nimrod's wife Semiramis. She, along with her son Tammuz, formed the basis for the many counterfeit mother-child cults of antiquity. The Roman syncretism of such pagan beliefs with Christianity led Catholicism to unbiblical teaching about Mary. (For a discussion of the relationship of the pagan mother-child cults to Roman Catholic teachings about Mary, see Alexander Hislop, [The Two Babylons](#) [Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux, 1959].) (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts 1-12)

**Jack Arnold** adds that "Mary was blessed among women because she was the mother of Jesus but she was just a sinner like every other human being in need of a Savior. "And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior" (Lk. 1:47+). Mary is not a co-redemptrix or one through whom men approach Christ as some believe. In this context, we find Mary praying to God and not being prayed to. Mary left a godly example for all womanhood but she is no mediator between God and man, for there is only one mediator, Jesus Christ. "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Ti 2:5). Mary has no place of superiority among women or men other than she was the instrument God chose to bear the humanity of His dear Son." ([Acts - 10 Day Until Zero Hour](#))

#### Related Resource:

- [Is Mary the co-redemptrix / mediatrix?](#)
- [Is prayer to saints / Mary biblical?](#)
- [Is the perpetual virginity of Mary biblical?](#)
- [What is Mariolatry?](#)
- [What is the immaculate conception?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about the virgin Mary?](#)



**His brothers** - These are the half brothers of Jesus recorded for us by Matthew who wrote "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and **His brothers, James** (writer of Epistle of James) **and Joseph and Simon and Judas** (writer of the Book of Jude)?" (Mt 13:55) Presumably all are present in the upper room. Jesus' brothers initially rejected Him as the Messiah, John recording "**For not even His brothers were believing in Him**" (John 7:5, cf Mk 3:21). Apparently after encountering the resurrected Jesus (e.g., James is mentioned in 1 Cor 15:7), the brothers became followers of Jesus. Jesus' half-brother **James** (cf Gal 1:19+) is the writer of the Epistle of James and also became a leader in the early church Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18). So this would have quite a joyful "family reunion" of Jesus' earthly family members - Jesus is alive and they will live eternally with Him as their Lord. There is no mention of His earthly father Joseph, who presumably had passed away.

---

**With One Accord** - "With one accord" is a wonderful little statement. You find it at least six times in the Book of the Acts. In Acts 1:14, they were in one accord in supplication. Acts 2:1 says, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Here they were in one accord in anticipation. Acts 2:46 says, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart." Here the church was in one accord in continuation they continued together in serving the Lord. In Acts 4:24 we have the local church in prayer: "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God." They were in one accord in adoration, worshiping and praising God and praying. In Acts 2:43 we read: "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch)." They were in one accord in their association; no divisions, no backbiting, no criticizing. Acts 15:25 contains another reference to "one accord": "It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul." They were in one accord in their determination. ([Something Happens When Churches Pray](#), W. Wiersbe)

---

**Power of Satan** - The Devil always fights the church when the church is on the move. Charles Spurgeon used to say that Satan never kicks a dead horse. Satan knew that the church was on the move, so he attacked it. In Acts 2 we read that 3000 people were converted. Then what happened? According to Acts 4, Satan came like a lion and had the apostles threatened. In chapter 5, Satan came like a serpent, influencing Ananias and Sapphira to infect the church with their lying and hypocrisy. If Satan can't win by persecution from the outside, he will try pollution on the inside. Then Satan came as the accuser in Acts 6. One group of widows accused the other group of widows of taking over. "We are being neglected," they said. Satan likes to get the saints to accuse one another. Then according to Acts 12, Satan came as a murderer. James was killed, and Peter was put into prison to be kept for execution. ([Something Happens When Churches Pray](#), W. Wiersbe)

---

## **Acts 1:9-14 ... And His Brothers**

**By David C. McCasland**

These all continued with one accord ... , with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. —Acts 1:14

For everyone with a close family member who is not a follower of Christ, Dr. Luke has included a wonderful surprise in the first chapter of Acts. Among those gathered for prayer in the days after Jesus ascended to heaven, Luke mentioned Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His brothers (Acts 1:14).

These same brothers grew up with Jesus in Nazareth (Mt. 13:54-55). They came to take charge of Jesus during His early ministry because they mistakenly thought He was out of His mind (Mk. 3:21,31-32). And they sarcastically urged Jesus to launch His "career" in Jerusalem even though they refused to believe in Him (Jn. 7:1-5).

Like many households today, Jesus' own family was divided by the issue of belief in Him. Our Lord experienced the heartache, misunderstanding, and even conflict that can result when families are divided over matters of faith. But at some point, though we are not told when, the brothers of Jesus came to believe in Him as their Lord and Messiah.

We can't compel our families to receive our Savior, but we can continue to love and pray for them. And we can remain confident that in God's providence wonderful surprises still happen. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thinking It Over

- Is someone you love resisting the Savior?
- How does God feel about that person? (2 Pet. 3:9).
- Pray for your loved one right now.

- God loves our lost loved ones even more than we do.

**Acts 1:15 At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said,**

KJV Acts 1:15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

- **Peter** Ps 32:5,6; 51:9-13; Luke 22:32; John 21:15-17
- **persons** Revelation 3:4; 11:13; \*Gr:
- **about one hundred and twenty** Acts 21:20; Mt 13:31; John 14:12; 1 Corinthians 15:6
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:15-26 What Happened to Judas](#) - Ray Pritchard
- [Acts 1:15, 20 The Scripture Had to Be Fulfilled](#) - Ray Pritchard
- [Acts 1:15-26 How God Uses Bad People to Do His Will: Providence](#) - Ray Pritchard

### **PETER TAKES THE LEAD... AGAIN!**

**At this time** - More literally "And in those days." What days? Marvin Vincent suggests the those days "of expectant prayer, and probably towards the close of them, when the nature of their future work began more clearly to dawn upon them, and the Holy Ghost, already "breathed" on the Eleven (Jn 20:22), was stirring in Peter, who was to be the leading spirit of the infant community (Mt 16:19)."

**David Guzik** - Here, Peter took a natural leadership role among the disciples. There is nothing wrong with seeing Peter as the leader of the first group of the apostles, even as he often was the spokesman among the disciples during the earthly ministry of Jesus. However, the idea that the authority of Peter was supreme and that he handed it down in unbroken succession, is unbiblical and wrong. ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**Jack Arnold** - Peter and the other apostles clearly understood there had to be twelve apostles for the kingdom reign and for the foundation of the church. "And Jesus said to them, 'Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel'" (Matt. 19:28, cf Rev 21:14, Eph 2:20).

**Brethren** (80) ([adelphos](#) from **a** = denotes unity + **delphus** = a womb) means brother or near kinsman. "Adelphós generally denotes a fellowship of life based on identity of origin, e.g., members of the same family (Mt. 1:2; Lk 3:1, 19; 6:14); members of the same tribe, countrymen, and so forth (Acts 3:22; 7:23; Ro 9:3)." (Zodhiates) Figuratively, **adelphos** describes members of the Christian community, spiritual brother, fellow Christian, fellow believer (Ro 8.29). Jews used adelphos to describe fellow countrymen (Acts 3:22). Clearly Peter is referring to both men and women (cf Acts 1:13-14).

**Adelphos** is frequently used in Acts -

Acts 1:14; Acts 1:15; Acts 1:16; Acts 2:29; Acts 2:37; Acts 3:17; Acts 3:22; Acts 6:3; Acts 7:2; Acts 7:13; Acts 7:23; Acts 7:25; Acts 7:26; Acts 7:37; Acts 9:17; Acts 9:30; Acts 10:23; Acts 11:1; Acts 11:12; Acts 11:29; Acts 12:2; Acts 12:17; Acts 13:15; Acts 13:26; Acts 13:38; Acts 14:2; Acts 15:1; Acts 15:3; Acts 15:7; Acts 15:13; Acts 15:22; Acts 15:23; Acts 15:32; Acts 15:33; Acts 15:36; Acts 15:40; Acts 16:2; Acts 16:40; Acts 17:6; Acts 17:10; Acts 17:14; Acts 18:18; Acts 18:27; Acts 21:7; Acts 21:17; Acts 21:20; Acts 22:1; Acts 22:5; Acts 22:13; Acts 23:1; Acts 23:5; Acts 23:6; Acts 28:14; Acts 28:15; Acts 28:17; Acts 28:21

**A gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons** - Literally "the multitude also of the names at the same place was, as it were, an hundred and twenty." We know that this was not all of the believers in Israel before the Pentecost for Paul writes in 1 Cor 15:6 "After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep." **Vincent** observes that "Many, therefore, of the "five hundred brethren" who saw their risen Lord "at once" (1 Co 15:6), must have remained in Galilee."

**Robertson** explains the use of the Greek word names for **people** - This Hebraistic use of name [onomatopoeia] = person occurs in the LXX (Nu 1:2 = "according to the number of **names**"; Nu 18:20; 3:40, 43; 26:53) and in Rev. 3:4 = "you have a few people (literally names) in Sardis"; Rev 11:13 = "seven thousand **people** (names) were killed in the earthquake."

**John Stott** on **120** - Marshall suggests that the reason why the number is mentioned is that 'in Jewish law a minimum of 120 Jewish men was required to establish a community with its own council'; so already the disciples were numerous enough 'to form a new community'. ([The Message of Acts](#))

The [Mishnah Sanhedrin 1.6](#) has this note - "And how many [inhabitants] must a city have before it may have a *Sanhedrin*? One hundred and twenty. Rabbi Nechemiah says, two hundred and thirty, [each judge] corresponding to a chief of a group of ten."

On the other hand **Robertson** says of the number 120 - "No special significance in the number 120, just the number there."

**MacArthur** - Many pastors would be discouraged with such a small congregation. One such man came to Charles Spurgeon and complained about the small size of his congregation. Spurgeon's devastating reply was that perhaps the man had as many people as he cared to give account for in the day of judgment. (Ibid)

**William Arnot** on **about 120** - Here is the first assembly of the Christian Church after the ascension of the Lord. This is the well's eye near the summit of the mountain, and the tiny rill that trickled over its brim that day has grown into a mighty river now. Down through the generations the stream has flowed without ceasing; and at this day, although many things impede its progress, the Christian Church is the greatest power in the world.

**William Barclay** makes an interesting point regarding the **120** - We are told that the number of the disciples was about 120. That is one of the most uplifting things in the New Testament. There were only 120 pledged to Christ and it is very unlikely that any of them had ever been outside the narrow confines of Palestine in his life. Since there were about 4,000,000 Jews in Palestine, this means that fewer than 1 in 30,000 were Christians. On the same basis it would mean that it was like there being only 300 Christians in the whole of Glasgow or 12 in Edinburgh; and these 120 simple folk were told to go out and evangelize the whole world. If ever anything began from small beginnings the Christian Church did. We may well be the only Christians in our shop, our factory, our office, in our circle. These men gallantly faced their task and so must we; and it may be that we too will be the small beginning from which the kingdom in our sphere will spread.

---

**J Vernon McGee**, never afraid to share his opinion, does so regarding Peter's leadership to select a successor for Judas - There is always a question about what happened here. Should Simon Peter have held this election to choose a man to take the place of Judas? I don't think so. I believe that the election to choose a successor to Judas Iscariot was conducted by Peter without the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit had not yet been given. Matthias was evidently a good man. He met the requirements of an apostle, which meant he must have seen the resurrected Christ, as that was a necessary requirement. (**Ed**: While I respect Dr McGee and usually agree with him, I think he is completely wrong in this case and is basing his belief more on feelings than on the objective evidence that Luke provides.)

**Steven Cole** addresses the question **was Peter wrong?** - With that purpose in mind, let me deal at the outset with a somewhat common view that I think is in error, namely, that the apostles were mistaken to replace Judas with Matthias. Those who propound this view (LIKE MCGEE ABOVE) argue that Peter was being his old, impulsive self, acting without waiting on the Lord. If he had just waited until the Holy Spirit had been given, God would have made it clear that Judas should be replaced by the apostle Paul. We never hear anymore of Matthias, which proves that he was not God's choice. Also, the way he was chosen, casting lots, was not from the Lord. Therefore, Peter was wrong.

**The major flaw with that view is that it goes against Luke's main purpose for this passage, which is to establish the credibility of the apostolic witnesses.** He isn't arguing that they were perfect men. He would never say that Peter was the infallible first Pope of the church. But even so, to say that Peter was mistaken on this crucial matter of appointing a replacement for Judas would be to go against the flow of what Luke is trying to establish here. Also, if Peter were mistaken, surely there would be some hint of it in the context; but **there is none**. Rather, he takes this action after waiting on the Lord in prayer (Acts 1:14). He bases his action on Scripture (Acts 1:16, 20). He does not promote his favorite candidate, but rather submits the whole process through prayer to the Lord's sovereign choice (Acts 1:24). (I'll deal with the casting of lots later.) The fact that Matthias is never heard from again is irrelevant, because we never hear of most of the other apostles again, either. While Paul was clearly an apostle, appointed by God, **he did not meet the criteria set forth here, since he was not with Jesus from the beginning of His ministry** If Peter had been wrong on such a major decision, surely there would be some correction from the Lord afterwards, but there is none. **I think we must conclude that Peter acted in line with the will of God.** (AND I COMPLETELY AGREE!) .....they determined the Lord's choice by casting lots. This involved putting each man's name on separate stones of similar size. The one that fell out of the pot first was the

choice. This was an acceptable means of determining God's will in the Old Testament (Lev. 16:8ff.; Num. 26:55ff.; Josh. 7:14; 1 Sam. 10:20; 14:41ff. Prov. 16:33; 18:18). But this is the last instance of it in the Bible, indicating that since the Holy Spirit has been given, it is no longer a valid means of determining God's will. Some Christians have used this method, but I would not recommend it. I would point out that if you do use it, you can't go for two out of three if you don't like the first result! You have to submit to God's will as revealed the first time! That's what the apostles did here. They weren't voting for their favorite candidate. They were submissive to God's will. They let Jesus, who chose the original twelve (Acts 1:2), choose Judas' replacement. In a jury trial, the attorneys try to discredit their adversary's witnesses. If they can convince the jury that their opponent's witnesses are questionable, they can win their case. God wants us to know that our Christian faith is credible. It is not based on religious speculations, but on the historical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. That event proves that He is God, and everything else follows from it. We know that the resurrection is true because these twelve godly witnesses, the apostles, affirmed that it was true. They did not profit from their witness, either materially or by gaining power. Rather, they were servants who laid down their lives for the sake of the truth that they had personally experienced, that Jesus Christ was risen from the dead. You must decide: Will you, like Judas, ignore the evidence and follow your selfish desires that lead to destruction? Or, will you accept the apostolic witness as true and follow Jesus as your Savior and Lord? ([Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#))

## Acts 1:15

And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (Acts 1:15).

Remorse deprives many Christians of the joy that should be theirs. A man in his middle years has withdrawn from the people in his church because he feels so bad about his past infidelity—a sin that broke up his home. An elderly woman needs counseling from time to time because she can't forget an affair she had more than fifty years ago. A young woman sees a psychiatrist because she can't forgive herself for having had an abortion. Each of these people is now a Christian, but each is paralyzed at times by remorse over the past.

If anyone ever had good reason for allowing the memory of a grievous sin to put him on the shelf, it was Peter. He had been such a coward. He had fled Gethsemane at Christ's arrest, and then denied three times that he knew the Lord Jesus. Later, he felt so bad that he wept bitterly. Yet he did not allow his remorse over past failures to make him ineffective in his service for Christ. He accepted the Lord's forgiveness, and he received new hope from Jesus' commission, "Feed my sheep." In Acts 1:15 we find him back in his role as the leader of the disciples. By taking Jesus' words of forgiveness to heart and by forgiving himself, he put the past under the blood of Christ.

As believers, when we confess our sin, we can leave it with Christ and forget it. Then we can move on to find a new way to serve Him. We need never let remorse remove our joy. —H. V. Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Christians should seek to erase from their memory

the sins God has erased from their record.

**Acts 1:16 "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.**

KJV Acts 1:16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

NLT Acts 1:16 "Brothers," he said, "the Scriptures had to be fulfilled concerning Judas, who guided those who arrested Jesus. This was predicted long ago by the Holy Spirit, speaking through King David.

- **Men and brethren** Acts 2:29,37; 7:2; 13:15,26,38; 15:7,13; 22:1; 23:1,6; 28:17
- **the Scripture had to be fulfilled** Acts 2:23; 13:27-29; Mt 26:54,56; John 10:35; 12:38-40; 19:28-30,36
- **which the Holy Spirit** the Acts 2:30,31; 4:25-28; 28:25; 2 Samuel 23:2; Mark 12:36; Hebrews 3:7,8; 1 Peter 1:11; 2 Peter 2:21
- **foretold by the mouth of David** Ps 41:9; 55:12-15; Mt 26:47; John 13:18; 18:2-8
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur

- [Acts 1:15, 20 The Scripture Had to Be Fulfilled](#) - Ray Pritchard
- [Acts 1:15-26 How God Uses Bad People to Do His Will: Providence](#) - Ray Pritchard

## A CLEAR DESCRIPTION DIVINE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE

**Brethren** (80) see [adelphos](#) - KJV has "Men and brethren" which is a more accurate rendering of the literal Greek (andres adelphoi).

**Robertson** says this way of addressing them is "More dignified and respectful than just "brethren." Demosthenes sometimes said Andres Athēnaioi. Cf. our "gentlemen and fellow-citizens." Women are included in this address though andres refers only to men."

On the other hand the **NET Note** suggests ""Men brothers." In light of the compound phrase (andres adelphoi, "Men brothers") Peter's words are best understood as directly addressed to the males present, possibly referring specifically to the twelve (really ten at this point - eleven minus the speaker, Peter) mentioned by name in v. 13."

**Steven Cole** explains that "Judas' defection and suicide had been difficult for the disciples to understand. How could a man chosen by Christ for such a high privilege turn against Him? Had Jesus made a mistake in choosing Judas? Why would God let such a terrible thing happen? Peter and the other apostles found help with these difficult questions by going to God's Word. "**The Scripture had to be fulfilled**" (Acts 1:16). "Had" is the word that Luke uses often to refer to divine necessity. God's purpose will be accomplished. God is sovereign, even over evil events, such as the betrayal and crucifixion of Jesus, and yet He is not responsible for sin. Judas was fully responsible for the wicked deeds that he committed, even though they were a necessary fulfillment of David's prophecies." ([Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#))

**The Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas-** Note that Peter affirms the divine inspiration of the holy Scripture, inspired by the Spirit moving through the writing of God's human instrument David. The Scripture to which Peter refers is quoted in Acts 1:20 (Ps 69:25, Ps 109:8). In His prayer in John 17:12 Jesus declared "I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that (PURPOSE CLAUSE) **the Scripture would be fulfilled.**" It is important to note that while Jesus knew there was a traitor and that his betrayal would fulfill Scripture, Judas was not a puppet or a robot, and he made a personal choice to betray Jesus, a choice that would bring personal, eternal consequences! And in the amazing, incomprehensible, transcendent redemptive plan of God, He cause the evil of Judas to work itself out for good. In Acts 2:23 Luke writes "this Man, delivered over by **the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God** (ONE COMPONENT OF WHICH WAS JUDAS' BETRAYAL OF JESUS!), you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death" that many might come to believe in Him and receive eternal life! This reminds us of Joseph who had been betrayed by his brothers and yet who under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was able to say "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive." (Ge 50:20).

**Ray Pritchard** - I am struck by two phrases Peter used: "**The Scripture had to be fulfilled**" and "**It is written.**" (Acts 1:20+) Everything he says is based on those two statements. The first speaks to God's sovereignty over the affairs of men and of nations. History really is His Story. Everything happens as part of God's ordained purpose. The second statement teaches us that the Word of God is a written revelation—not a hunch or feeling or a mystical revelation. If you want to know what God says, read the Bible. What the Bible says, God says. This is the position of historic Christianity. These words reveal Peter's two great convictions about the Word of God. (A) The Word of God is true. (B) The Word of God speaks to this situation. Peter actually believed that hundreds of years earlier, David had prophesied in the Psalms about the betrayal of Judas. He also believed that by studying Holy Scripture, the early church could find out what God had to say about their particular situation. This is a very high view of biblical inspiration.

**Pritchard** goes on to say that "Theologians sometimes speak of the "dual authorship" of Holy Scripture. They mean that when Moses sat down to write the first five books of the Bible, he wrote using his own words and vocabulary, and so did David when he wrote Psalms, and John when he wrote his gospel, and Paul when he wrote his epistles. Each man writes in his own way, reflecting his own personality. But how do we know that what they wrote was what God wanted written? Acts 1:16 tells us that the Holy Spirit spoke first. He spoke the words "through the mouth of" Moses, David, John and Paul—and all the rest of the biblical writers. It was their words but those words came first from the Holy Spirit. And because they come from the Holy Spirit, those words are true and accurate and trustworthy and inerrant and infallible. This doesn't mean that the biblical writers wrote Scripture by taking dictation from God. If that were the case, then they would all sound exactly the same. But it does mean that God superintended the entire process so that when Moses, David, John and Paul sat down to write, they weren't just writing their words, they were also writing God's words. That's why you can read anywhere in the Bible and have complete confidence in what it says—even though in one place it's law, in another it's history, in another it's poetry, and in another place it's prophecy. The books of the Bible don't sound alike because they were written by 40 authors over a period of 1600 years. But each part of the Bible is the true Word of God



because each part was spoken by the Holy Spirit." (See full sermon [Acts 1:15, 20 The Scripture Had to Be Fulfilled](#))

**Guzik** has an interesting comment on Peter - Peter's words show wisdom we did not often see in him before. He began by noting that Judas didn't spoil God's plan, he fulfilled it (this Scripture had to be fulfilled). This is something that only wise and mature disciples can see in the aftermath of evil. ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**The Scripture had to be fulfilled** - In other words Peter refers to a prophecy in the Old Testament which was fulfilled. "God's Word is true, and what He predicts must certainly come to pass. "In Psalm 115:3, the psalmist writes, "Our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases." God Himself adds in Isaiah 46:10, "My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure" (cf. Josh. 23:14; 1 Kings 8:15, 20, 24). Isaiah added that God's word never returns empty but always accomplishes its purpose (Isaiah 55:11)." (MacArthur)

**The Scripture** - Not plural (Scriptures) but singular and with the definite article (ton = the) which signifies not the whole OT but a more specific passage.

**Scripture** (1124) (**graphie** from **grapho** = to write; English = graphite - the lead in a pencil!) means first a writing or thing written, a document. The majority of the NT uses refer to the Old Testament writings, in a general sense of the whole collection when the **plural** (= Scriptures - Matt. 21:42; 22:29; 26:54; Mk. 12:24; 14:49; Lk. 24:27, 32, 45; Jn. 5:39; Acts 17:2, 11; 18:24, 28; Rom. 15:4; 2Pe 3:16) is used and other times of a particular passage when the **singular** is used (= the Scripture - Mk. 12:10; 15:28; Lk. 4:21; Jn. 13:18; 19:24, 36f; Acts 1:16; 8:35; Ro 11:2; Jas. 2:8, 23) and is used in such a way that quoting Scripture is understood to be the same as quoting God!

#### Related Resources:

- [Bible \(its uniqueness and inspiration\)](#) and [Inspiration](#) - Bob Utley
- [What are the different theories of biblical inspiration?](#)
- [How does the translation process impact the inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility of the Bible?](#)
- [Is there proof for the inspiration of the Bible?](#)
- [What does it mean that the Bible is inspired?](#)
- [What is Verbal Plenary Preservation?](#)

**John MacArthur** - Some were no doubt wondering how the defection of Judas fit into God's plan, or how Jesus' words in Matthew 19:28 were now to be fulfilled. In that passage, He promised the apostles, "You who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, acts to allay those doubts and avoid any possible quibbling over who would occupy the twelfth throne. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts 1-12)

#### Related Resources:

- [Luke 6:16 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Judas Iscariot, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:16 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Judas Iscariot, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

**Robertson - Peter** here assumes that Jesus is the Messiah and finds scripture illustrative of the treachery of Judas. He applies it to Judas and quotes the two passages in Acts 1:20 (Ps. 69:25; 109:8). The **Holy Spirit** has not yet come upon them, but Peter feels moved to interpret the situation. He feels that his mind is opened by Jesus (Luke 24:45). It is a logical, not a moral, necessity that Peter points out. Peter here claims the Holy Spirit as speaking in the Scriptures as he does in 2 Peter 1:21-note ("**for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**")

**Had to be (Must be)** (1163) (**dei** from **deo** = to bind) refers to what is not optional but necessary. It is needful (binding) to happen out of intrinsic necessity or inevitability. BDAG says dei speaks "of that which takes place because of circumstances or inner necessity, with the context determining the cause." The necessity of the Word of God to be fulfilled reminds me of some of the last wise words of Joshua, for before he died, he told Israel ""Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed." (Joshua 23:14). Beloved, God's promises are money in the bank so to speak. We can stake our life on God's prophecies and promises which will ALL be perfectly fulfilled. See [What are God's promises?](#) and [How do I know which of God's promises are for me?](#) Adrian Rogers said "There is no promise God cannot keep, no prayer God will not answer, and no problem too hard for Him to solve." "There are over 7,000 promises in God's Word — and He keeps them all! We don't live by explanations — we live by promises. God's promises are not mottos to hang on the wall. They are checks to take to the bank!"



**Luke's** frequently uses the verb of **dei** - Two of my favorites are in the context of salvation - Acts 4:12 - "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we **MUST** (dei) be saved." Acts 16:30 where the Philippian jailer asks "after he brought them out..." "Sirs, what **MUST** (dei) I do to be saved?" (Answer = Acts 16:31)

Lk. 2:49; Lk. 4:43; Lk. 9:22; Lk. 11:42; Lk. 12:12; Lk. 13:14; Lk. 13:16; Lk. 13:33; Lk. 15:32; Lk. 17:25; Lk. 18:1; Lk. 19:5; Lk. 21:9; Lk. 22:7; Lk. 22:37; Lk. 24:7; Lk. 24:26; Lk. 24:44; Acts 1:16; Acts 1:21; Acts 3:21; Acts 4:12; Acts 5:29; Acts 9:6; Acts 9:16; Acts 14:22; Acts 15:5; Acts 16:30; Acts 17:3; Acts 19:21; Acts 20:35; Acts 23:11; Acts 24:19; Acts 25:10; Acts 25:24; Acts 26:9; Acts 27:21; Acts 27:24; Acts 27:26

**Fulfilled** (4137)(**pleroo**) is a verb which speaks of totality and in this context means to fulfill a prophecy, promise, etc. (Mt 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; Mt 5:17; Mt 8:17, 12:17, Mt 13:35; 26:54, 56; Mt 27:9, Mk 14:49; Lk 9:31; 22:16; Jn 18:9, 32; 19:24, 36; Ro 13:8; Gal 5:14)

**Pritchard** explains that Judas' turning away from and betraying Jesus fulfilled Bible prophecy to the letter - The gospel writers record many Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The total number of prophecies is well over 100. Here are five specific prophecies that were fulfilled when Judas betrayed Jesus:

- Psalm 41:9—Close friend will betray Christ (see John 13:18).
- Zechariah 11:12—30 pieces of silver (see Matthew 26:15).
- Zechariah 11:13—Judas would give the money back. (see Matthew 27:5).
- Psalm 69:25—Reputation destroyed forever. (see Acts 1:20).
- Psalm 109:8—Replaced by another man—Matthias (see Acts 1:20).

Judas didn't know it—and doesn't get any credit for it—but his dastardly deed actually fulfilled predictions given by the Holy Spirit hundreds of years before he was born. (Read Pastor Pritchard's excellent message = [Acts 1:15-26 How God Uses Bad People to Do His Will: Providence](#))

**Who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus** - "who guided those who arrested Jesus." Matthew records this event "While He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people." (Mt 26:47) Peter's point is that the betrayal of Jesus by Judas did not surprise God and did not through off track His perfect plan from the Redemption of souls "from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues." (Rev 7:9-11).

**Guide** (3595)(**hodegos** from **hodos** = way + **hegeomai** = lead) is literally "a leader on the way", a conductor, a guide. Judas was someone who showed the Romans the way to Jesus. In a sense he was a "blind" (spiritually speaking) guide.

**Arrested** (4815)(**sullambano** from **sun/syn** = together with + **lambáno** = to take, to seize) means literally to seize or take together and conveys the picture of claspings. **Sullambano** has several meanings (bring together, to enclose, to seize, to trap or capture.) depending on the context, but the most common meaning being to arrest someone (7/16 uses) or take them into custody as in Luke 22:54 (cf Mt 26:55, Jn 18:12) "**Having arrested** Him, they led Him away and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance."

**Luke's** uses of **sullambano** - Lk. 1:24; Lk. 1:31; Lk. 1:36; Lk. 2:21; Lk. 5:7; Lk. 5:9; Lk. 22:54; Jn. 18:12; Acts 1:16; Acts 12:3; Acts 23:27; Acts 26:21

## Acts 1:17 "For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry."

KJV Acts 1:17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

- **For he was counted among us** Mt 10:4; Mark 3:19; Luke 6:16; 22:47; John 6:70,71; 17:12
- **received his share in this ministry.** Acts 1:25; 12:25; 20:24; 21:19; 2 Corinthians 4:1; 5:18; Ephesians 4:11,12
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur

**For he was counted among us** - Yes, Judas was of the 12 physically, but not spiritually, for he was never saved by grace through faith, even as Jesus Himself testified, John recording "But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the

beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was (JUDAS) that would betray Him." (John 6:64). Later, Jesus added "Jesus answered them, "Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?" Now He meant **Judas the son of Simon Iscariot**, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him." (John 6:70-71). And in His high priestly prayer Jesus prayed "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but **the son of perdition** (JUDAS), so that the Scripture would be fulfilled." (Jn 17:12)

**Counted** (2674) (**katarithmeo** from **kata** = + **arithmeo** = to number) means to be numbered with or counted as a member of a group (in this the only NT use referring to the group of the apostle who followed Jesus). Used 3x in the Septuagint - Ge 50:3; Nu 14:29; 2 Chr. 31:19

**Gilbrant** - This verb appears in classical Greek and the Septuagint in both the active voice, "to count," and the passive voice, "to count among." Genesis 50:3 records the period of mourning in all of Egypt following the death of Jacob. The other two occurrences in the Septuagint reflect the passive use, being "counted among" in a corporate sense. (The Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

**MacArthur** describes Judas' **share in this ministry** - Judas represents the greatest example of wasted opportunity in all of history. He had the rare privilege, given to only twelve men, of living and ministering with Jesus Christ, God incarnate, for more than three years. He had the same convincing, overwhelming opportunity to come to faith in Him as the eleven did. Yet his motives for following Jesus were never anything but selfish. He no doubt shared the common Jewish hope that Messiah would deliver the nation from the yoke of the hated Romans. When it became obvious that was not Jesus' plan, and he would not get the wealth and power he wanted, Judas decided to cut his losses and get out with whatever he could salvage. Betraying the incarnate Son of God to the authorities for a paltry sum seemed a way to gain some compensation. The greed he evidenced by that act was another indicator of his wicked heart. There had been a preview of this avarice when, after Jesus' anointing with costly perfume by Mary, Judas indignantly exclaimed, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii, and given to poor people?" (John 12:5). His real concern was evident from John's cutting editorial comment in verse 6: "Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it." Driven by disappointment and greed, this most tragic of all men squandered inestimable privilege, betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver, and damned his soul to hell. Judas's tragic life reached a damning climax in his suicide. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts 1-12)

**Whitcomb** on Judas betrayal - His betrayal was predestined; Did Judas have a choice? Yes; you can't harmonize predestination and human responsibility; "No man can come unless the Father draws him; but whosoever comes I will in no wise cast out." Judas made a choice against the Savior; Have you made one against Him?

**Received his share in this ministry** - NET Note says "and was chosen to have a share in this ministry." The term *lanchano* here and in 2 Pet 1:1 can be understood as referring to the process of divine choice and thus be translated, "was chosen to have.""

The thought is that of the allotment of a share in the apostolic ministry is God's choice, not man's desire.

**Received** (cast lots, chosen by lot) (2975) (**lagchano**) means to obtain by lot (as used by Homer in Greek writings; eg, to obtain by fate by the will of the gods) and so to obtain something as a portion (to receive, to obtain). **Lagchano** speaks of what comes to someone always apart from his own efforts.

Luke 1:9 according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

John 19:24 So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be"; this was to fulfill the Scripture: "THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS."

Acts 1:17; "For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry."

2 Peter 1:1 Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those **who have received** a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:

**Share** (lot) (2819) (**kleros** from **kláo** = to break) was first a specially marked small object, pebble or a piece of wood used in **casting lots** as in Acts 1:17 and Acts 1:26. The object was thrown down in order to aid the making decisions a practice based on pagan views of chance (Greeks and Romans), or in the case of believers using the lot and interpreting the result as guided by God (see Acts 1:26 in choosing Judas' replacement). Used of the soldiers who "cast **lots** dividing up (Jesus') garments." (Lk 23:34+) In Acts 8:21 Peter uses **kleros** again in his rebuke of Simon who tried to purchase the gift of the Holy Spirit declaring "You have no part or **portion** (**kleros**) in this matter, for your heart is not right before God." In Acts 26:18 Jesus is giving Paul his commission to go to the Gentiles "to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an **inheritance** (**kleros** = eternal salvation in this context) among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." (Acts 26:18+) Paul in addressing the believers at Colossae uses **kleros** in his prayer "giving thanks to the

Father, Who has qualified us to share in the **inheritance** (kleros - our eternal salvation) of the saints in Light." (Col 1:12+) Finally Peter addressing the elders admonishes them to not be "lording it (their oversight of the believers) over those **allotted to your charge** (kleros), but proving to be examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:3+)

**Robertson** adds that **kleros** is "From this latter usage the Latin clerus, clericus, our clergy, one chosen by divine lot. So Peter says that Judas "obtained by lot the lot of this ministry" (diakonias) which he had when he betrayed Jesus. The Master chose him and gave him his opportunity."

**Ministry** (1248) (**diakonia** probably from **dioko** = to pursue) means the rendering or assistance or help by performing certain duties, often of a humble or menial nature serve, including such mundane activities as waiting on tables or caring for household needs—activities without apparent dignity. Diakonia is related to diakonos, a servant, not in his relation (like doulos) but more in regard to his activity. The term covers both slaves and hired servants. **Barclay** adds that "the main idea which lies behind **diakonia** is that of practical service. It is from its kindred word diakonos (1249) that we get our English word deacon. It may be that a man will never have the privilege of standing forth in public and proclaiming Christ; but there is no man who cannot every day show the love of Christ in deeds of service to his fellow men."

Uses of **diakonia** by Luke - Lk. 10:40; Acts 1:17; Acts 1:25; Acts 6:1; Acts 6:4; Acts 11:29; Acts 12:25; Acts 20:24; Acts 21:19;

**Acts 1:18 (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out.**

KJV Acts 1:18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

NET Acts 1:18 (Now this man Judas acquired a field with the reward of his unjust deed, and falling headfirst he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out.

- **Now this man acquired a field** Mt 27:3-10
- **with the price of his wickedness** Numbers 22:7,17; Joshua 7:21-26; 2 Kings 5:20-27; Job 20:12-15; Mt 25:15; 2 Peter 2:15,16
- **and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle** Ps 55:15,23; Mt 27:5
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- See in depth discussion on Judas and Akeldama in commentary on Matthew 27:3-10.

## LUKE'S PARENTHETICAL EXPLANATION OF THE FATE OF JUDAS

**Robertson** - Verses 18 and 19 are a long parenthesis of Luke by way of explanation of the fate of Judas. In verse 20 Peter resumes and quotes the scripture to which he referred in verse 16.

**Warren Wiersbe** once said "If you are not born again, the day will come when you will wish you had never been born at all." (cf Jesus words to Judas - Mt 26:24, 25).

**Now this man acquired a field** - Luke records that this man acquired the field named **Hakeldama**, whereas Matthew states the chief priests took the 30 pieces of silver and purchased the **Potter's Field** or "**field of blood**" which is the meaning of **Hakeldama**.

**Gotquestions** addresses the question concerning who paid for the field, describing two ways to reconcile the account in Matthew (see Matthew's record below) and in Acts...

1) Judas was promised the thirty pieces of silver several days before Jesus' arrest (Mark 14:11). Sometime during the days leading up to his betrayal of Jesus, Judas made arrangements to purchase a field, although no money had yet been transferred. After the deed was done, Judas was paid, but he then returned the money to the chief priests. The priests, who considered the silver to be **blood money**, completed the transaction that Judas had begun and bought the field.

2) When Judas threw the thirty pieces of silver down, the priests took the money and used it to buy the potter's field (Matthew 27:7). Judas may not have purchased the field personally, but he provided the money for the transaction and could then be said

to be the purchaser. (See [How did Judas die?](#))

**Matthew 27:3-10+** records Judas' suicidal hanging...

Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" 5 And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. 6 The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood." 7 And they conferred together and with the money bought the **Potter's Field** (Ed: WHICH LUKE CALLS **HAKELDAMA** - ARAMAIC FOR "**FIELD OF BLOOD**") "as a burial place for strangers. 8 For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day (WHAT DAY? ABOUT 30 YEARS LATER AT THE TIME GOSPEL OF MATTHEW WAS WRITTEN). 9 Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled ([See explanation](#)): "AND THEY TOOK THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, THE PRICE OF THE ONE WHOSE PRICE HAD BEEN SET by the sons of Israel; 10 AND THEY GAVE THEM FOR THE POTTER'S FIELD, AS THE LORD DIRECTED ME."

**Gotquestions: Concerning how Judas died**, here is a simple reconciliation of the facts: Judas hanged himself in the potter's field (Matthew 27:5), and that is how he died. Then, after his body had begun to decay and bloat, the rope broke, or the branch of the tree he was using broke, and his body fell, bursting open on the land of the potter's field (Acts 1:18–19). Note that Luke does not say that Judas died from the fall, only that his body fell. The Acts passage presumes Judas's hanging, as a man falling down in a field does not normally result in his body bursting open. Only decomposition and a fall from a height could cause a body to burst open. So **Matthew mentions the actual cause of death, and Luke focuses more on the horror surrounding it.** [How did Judas die?](#)

**Henry Morris** - By comparison with the account in Matthew 27:3-8, it is evident that Judas "purchased" this field only indirectly. He threw down his "**blood money**" (the thirty pieces of silver paid him for betraying Jesus) in front of the chief priests, who used it to buy the field called **Aceldama** (Acts 1:19), or "the field of blood" (Matthew 27:8). He then hanged himself, apparently in the same field, but bungled the attempt, actually dying as described in this verse. (Defender's Study Bible)

**Norman Geisler** - These accounts are not contradictory, but mutually complementary. Judas hung himself exactly as Matthew affirms that he did. The account in Acts simply adds that Judas fell, and his body opened up at the middle and his intestines gushed out. This is the very thing one would expect of someone who hanged himself from a tree over a cliff and fell on sharp rocks below. (When Critics Ask?)

**Gaebelein** - There is no discrepancy between Matthew's account and the words here. He committed suicide by hanging, and the rope broke, and the terrible thing happened, which is reported here.

**John MacArthur** - The fact that this quotation comes from Zechariah 11:12-13 and not from the book of Jeremiah has caused some interpreters to accuse Matthew of error. Others have tried to relate the quotation to sections of Jeremiah 18 or 19, although it clearly does not fit. The explanation is found in the Jewish division of the Old Testament into three sections—the Law the Writings, and the Prophets. In the rabbinical order of the prophetic books, Jeremiah was always listed first. For that reason the entire prophetic category was sometimes referred to as Jeremiah, just as the entire section of the Writings was sometimes referred to as the Psalms, its opening book. Spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was therefore the equivalent of saying, "recorded in the prophetic books." (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Matthew 24-28) (For other explanations of the allusion to Jeremiah in a passage that is more compatible with Zechariah 11:12-13 see commentary on Mt 27:9).

**Acquired** (2932)([ktaomai](#)) means to get, procure, obtain or acquire something for oneself by purchase for a price (Acts 1:18; 8:20; 22:28).

**With the price of his wickedness** - "with the reward for his wickedness" (ESV), "with the money he received for his treachery" (NLT).

**Price** (reward) (3408)([misthos](#)) literally refers to pay which is due for labor performed or dues paid for work. **Misthos** is used in two general senses in the NT, either to refer to wages or to reward, recognition or recompense. In this latter figurative usage, **misthos** refers to rewards which God bestows for the moral quality of an action, such rewards most often to be bestowed in eternity future. Peter describes those false prophets who like Judas receive the "**wages** (misthos) of doing wrong" (2 Peter 2:13+) "forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the **wages** (misthos)

of unrighteousness" those "wages" they would justly obtain because of their iniquity, similar to the "wages" paid to Judas for his betrayal of Christ (2 Peter 2:15-+).

**Luke** uses this same word **misthos** in his Gospel to describe the striking contrast of the **reward** for righteousness and here the **reward** for wickedness! Judas' "reward" was temporal, whereas the reward for saints who are persecuted and love their enemies is eternal (in heaven)! There is simply no comparison.

Luke 6:23 "Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your **reward** is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets.

Luke 6:35 "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your **reward** will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men.

**Falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out**- Note that Luke a medical doctor does not state Judas died by the fall and the bursting open of his abdomen. Matthew 27:5 states Judas "went away and hanged himself." That is when he actually died (I am a pathologist and as I read the literal text, Judas died by hanging.)

**Matthew** records that Judas "threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself." (Mt 27:5)

**Robertson** on **headlong** (falling headfirst) - The word means, not "headlong," but "flat on the face" as opposed to huptios on the back (Hackett). Hackett observes that the place suits admirably the idea that Judas hung himself (Matt. 27:5) and, the rope breaking, fell flat on his face

**Robertson** on **burst open** - First aorist active indicative of laskō old verb (here only in the NT), to clang, to crack, to crash, like a falling tree. Aristophanes uses it of crashing bones.

**Gushed out** (1632)(**ekcheo** from **ek** = out + **chéo** = pour) means literally to flow out, to gush forth or to pour out. The inherent idea is to cause something to be emitted in quantity. Luke uses **ekcheo** to describe "the gift of the Holy Spirit...poured out on the Gentiles also" (Acts 10:45) and "the blood of...Stephen...being shed (witnessed by Paul)." (Acts 22:20) Paul uses ekcheo to describe "the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit." (Ro 5:5).

In somewhat of a bitter irony the same verb ekcheo is used by Luke in describing symbolically the very "blood" Judas choose to betray!

And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is **poured out** for you is the new covenant in My blood. (Lk. 22:20+)

#### Related Resource:

- [Matthew 27:1-10 The Traitor's Suicide](#) - sermon by John MacArthur
- [Is Zechariah 11:12-13 a Messianic prophecy?](#)
- [Why does Matthew 27:9 attribute the prophecy to Jeremiah when it is from Zechariah?](#)
- [Who was Judas Iscariot?](#)

---

#### QUESTION - [How did Judas die?](#)

**ANSWER** - The death of [Judas Iscariot](#) was a suicide committed after he was filled with remorse (but not repentance) for his betrayal of Jesus. Matthew and Luke (in the book of Acts) both mention some details of Judas's death, and reconciling the details between the two accounts has presented some difficulties.

Matthew says that Judas died by hanging. Here is the account in Matthew's Gospel: "So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. The chief priests picked up the coins and said, 'It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.' So they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day" (Matthew 27:5-8).

Luke says that Judas fell into a field and that his body ruptured. Here is the account in Acts: "With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood" (Acts 1:18-19).

Which account is correct? Did Judas die by hanging, or did he die by falling? Or are both true? A related question is, Did Judas buy the field, or did the priests buy the field?



Concerning how Judas died, here is a simple reconciliation of the facts: Judas hanged himself in the potter's field (Matthew 27:5), and that is how he died. Then, after his body had begun to decay and bloat, the rope broke, or the branch of the tree he was using broke, and his body fell, bursting open on the land of the potter's field (Acts 1:18–19). Note that Luke does not say that Judas died from the fall, only that his body fell. The Acts passage presumes Judas's hanging, as a man falling down in a field does not normally result in his body bursting open. Only decomposition and a fall from a height could cause a body to burst open. So Matthew mentions the actual cause of death, and Luke focuses more on the horror surrounding it.

Concerning who paid for the field, here are two possible ways to reconcile the facts: 1) Judas was promised the thirty pieces of silver several days before Jesus' arrest (Mark 14:11). Sometime during the days leading up to his betrayal of Jesus, Judas made arrangements to purchase a field, although no money had yet been transferred. After the deed was done, Judas was paid, but he then returned the money to the chief priests. The priests, who considered the silver to be blood money, completed the transaction that Judas had begun and bought the field. 2) When Judas threw the thirty pieces of silver down, the priests took the money and used it to buy the potter's field (Matthew 27:7). Judas may not have purchased the field personally, but he provided the money for the transaction and could then be said to be the purchaser. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**Acts 1:19 And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)**

KJV Acts 1:19 And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.

- **And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem** Acts 2:22; Mt 28:15
- **so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood** 2 Samuel 2:16;
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- See in depth discussion on Judas and Akeldama in commentary on Matthew 27:3-10.

**And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem**

**So that in their own language** - "Their own language refers to Aramaic, the primary language spoken in Palestine in Jesus' day." (NET Note)

**That field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood** - "Why did the field purchased come to be known as "The Field of Blood?" Matthew's answer is that it had been bought with "blood money;" Luke gives no explicit reason, but implies that it was because Judas' blood had been spilled there. Evidently different traditions developed (as so often happens) as to how the field got its name, so that different people called it "Blood Field" for different reasons." (Paul Apple)

**Morris** - This plot of land, "the field of blood," had been purchased with blood money (Matthew 27:6), and was thus fittingly named.

**Robertson on Akeldama** (Hakeldamach). This Aramaic word Peter explains as "the field of blood." Two traditions are preserved: one in Matt. 27:7 which explains that the priests purchased this potter's field with the money which Judas flung down as the price of the blood of Jesus. The other in Acts describes it as the field of blood because Judas poured out his blood there. Hackett and Knowling argue that both views can be true. "The ill-omened name could be used with a double emphasis" (Hackett).

**Acts 1:20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'LET HIS HOMESTEAD BE MADE DESOLATE, AND LET NO ONE DWELL IN IT'; and, 'LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE HIS OFFICE.'**

KJV Acts 1:20 For it is written in the book of Ps, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

- **For it is written in the book of Psalms** Acts 13:33; Luke 20:42; 24:44
- **LET HIS HOMESTEAD BE MADE DESOLATE, AND LET NO ONE DWELL IN IT.** Ps 69:25; Ps 109:9-15; Zechariah 5:3,4
- **LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE HIS OFFICE** Acts 1:25; Ps 109:8



- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur

**For it is written in the book of Psalms** - After Luke's parenthetical explanation in Acts 1:18-19, Luke resumes his record of Peter quoting the specific Scripture to which he had referred in Acts 1:16. This is the first time we see Peter quote from Scripture in the NT. And notice that his quote has a specific purpose which was to justify their selection of a replacement for Judas. This is shown especially by Ps 109:8, which Peter applies to their current situation. In essence using this Scripture, he is announcing to all present that God had a contingency plan, so to speak. God knew Judas would betray Jesus and then kill himself leaving a vacancy and He prophetically provided for this event by inspiring David to pen the words in Psalm 109:8. Peter able to interpret that prophetic psalm and apply it to their current "predicament." You say how did Peter know that Ps 109:8 was a prophecy that called for a replacement for Judas? Recall that Jesus had given the apostles insight into the OT Scriptures after His resurrection, Luke recording

Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the **Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms** must be fulfilled." 45 Then **He opened their minds to understand** (suniami) **the Scriptures**, (Lk 24:44-45+).

**Comment:** As an aside, if Peter needed to have his mind opened to understand the Scripture, is our need any less? Of course not. We need to beseech God "Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law." (Psalm 119:18) Then we need to submit to the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who "will guide you into all the truth." (John 16:13).

**Spurgeon** comments on **Ps 119:18** - The prayer implies a conscious darkness, a dimness of spiritual vision, a powerlessness to remove that defect, and a full assurance that God can remove it. It shows also that the writer knew that there were vast treasures in the word which he had not yet fully seen, marvels which he had not yet beheld, mysteries which he had scarcely believed. The Scriptures teem with marvels; the Bible is wonder land; it not only relates miracles, but it is itself a world of wonders. **Yet what are these to closed eyes? And what man can open his own eyes, since he is born blind? God himself must reveal revelation to each heart.** Scripture needs opening, but not one half so much as our eyes do: the veil is not on the book, but on our hearts. What perfect precepts, what precious promises, what priceless privileges are neglected by us because we wander among them like blind men among the beauties of nature, and they are to us as a landscape shrouded in darkness! The Psalmist had a measure of spiritual perception, or he would never have known that there were wondrous things to be seen, nor would he have prayed, "open thou mine eyes"; but what he had seen made him long for a clearer and wider sight. This longing proved the genuineness of what he possessed, for it is a test mark of the true knowledge of God that it causes its possessor to thirst for deeper knowledge. ([Treasury of David](#))

**G Campbell Morgan** writes "And once again, observe their confidence in the Scriptures. Peter now commenced to interpret the present by the Scriptures of the past. He made quotation from two of the great Psalms (Ps 69 and Ps 109) and distinctly, and without any hesitation, said that David wrote these things by the Holy Spirit concerning Judas. If we read Psalm 69 or Ps 109, without the illumination of this interpretation, we should never dream that there was a reference in them to Judas, or that there was a reference in them to the Messiah. The great Messianic psalms are indeed Messianic psalms; but the writers did not understand the full richness of their Messianic values. David was referring to one of his own enemies; but Peter deliberately and quietly quotes the old and familiar passage, and says that finally it had reference to Judas and to Jesus. One of the last things that Luke tells us in his Gospel story is of how Jesus walked and talked with the disciples, and opened to them all the Scriptures, beginning from Moses (Lk 24:44-45); of how He spoke to this self same group just before leaving them, and taught them that it behoved Him to suffer, that all things written in the Scriptures should be fulfilled; naming the three great divisions, Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms. Peter was a Hebrew brought up on the very Scriptures which he was quoting, familiar with their letter, undoubtedly; but now he read them with a new understanding. He had seen a new light in them." ([Acts of the Apostles](#))

**Steven Cole** on **it is written in the book of Psalms** - The point is that the apostles were men of the Word who were appealing to the Word to explain the difficulty of Judas' defection and death, and of the need to replace him with another credible witness. They teach us that we should go to God's Word with all of the difficulties that we encounter. Thus we can believe the testimony of the apostles because they were men whose lives had been changed through a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. They were men of obedience and prayer, and men of God's Word. ([Why Christianity is Credible Acts 1:12-26](#))

**Written** (1125)(**grapho** from root **graph-** = primarily means to scratch on or engrave as on an ornament, reports, letters, etc; **English** = graph, graphic, etc) means to engrave or inscribe with a pen or stylus characters or letters on a surface which can be

wood, wax, metal, leather, stone, parchment, dirt (John ), paper, etc. Written is perfect tense, passive voice, indicative mood (mood of reality) signifying the words have been written down in the past and stand or remain written (cf Mt 5:18, Mt 24:35, Mk 13:31).

**LET HIS HOMESTEAD BE MADE DESOLATE, AND LET NO ONE DWELL IN IT'** -Psalm 69 is often quoted as Messianic in Matthew and John.

Ps 69:25 May their camp be desolate; May none dwell in their tents.

**Spurgeon** - This may signify that their posterity shall be cut off, and the abode which they occupy shall be left a ruin; or, as our Lord quoted it, it refers to the temple, which was left by its divine occupant and became a desolation. What occurs on a large scale to families and nations is often fulfilled in individuals, as was conspicuously the case with Judas, to whom Peter referred this prophecy, Acts 1:20

**David Guzik** comments - David, the writer of these quoted Psalms, knew what it was like to be betrayed by another. When David was a fugitive from Saul, a man named Doeg betrayed him (1 Samuel 21-22), and many innocent people died as a result. David may have penned these very words in reference to this betrayer. ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**Robertson on homestead** - His habitation (hē epaulis autou). Only here in the N. T., a country house, cottage, cabin.

**And, 'LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE HIS OFFICE** - Ps 109:8 in the OT reads "Let his days be few; Let another take his office."

**Spurgeon** - Who would desire a persecuting tyrant to live long? As well might we wish length of days to a mad dog. If he will do nothing but mischief the shortening of his life will be the lengthening of the world's tranquility. "Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days", "this is bare justice to them, and great mercy to the poor and needy. And let another take his office. Perhaps a better man may come, at any rate it is time a change were tried. So used were the Jews to look upon these verses as the doom of traitors, of cruel and deceitful mind, that Peter saw at once in the speedy death of Judas a fulfilment of this sentence, and a reason for the appointment of a successor who should take his place of oversight. A bad man does not make an office bad: another may use with benefit that which he perverted to ill uses. (On **days be few**) Sin the great shortener of human life. After the flood the whole race lived a shorter time; passion and avaricious care shorten life, and some sins have a peculiar power to do this, lust, drunkenness, etc.

**Augustine** - By "his days", he meant the days of his (Judas') apostleship, which were few; since before the passion of our Lord, they were ended by his crime and death. And as if it were asked, What then shall become of that most sacred number twelve, within which our Lord willed, not without a meaning, to limit his twelve first apostles? He at once addeth, and **let another take his office**. As much as to say, let both himself be punished according to his desert, and let his number be filled up. And if any one desire to know how this was done, let him read the Acts of the Apostles.

**Albert Barnes**.on the prayer **may another take his office** - So every man acts, and practically prays, who seeks to remove a bad and corrupt man from office. As such an office must be filled by some one, all the efforts which he puts forth to remove a wicked man tend to bring it about that "another should take his office", and for this it is right to labour and pray. The act does not of itself imply malignity or bad feeling, but is consistent with the purest benevolence, the kindest feelings, the strictest integrity, the sternest patriotism, and the highest form of piety.

**Guzik** comments - When David was betrayed, he desired that the betrayer would be desolate and that another fill the betrayer's office. It wasn't hard to understand that the Son of David – Jesus, whom David often prefigured – would desire the same thing. This was notable desire for God's will. Because of the principle of the quoted Scripture, they decided to replace Judas because they believe it is what Jesus wanted, not because it is what they wanted ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**Let...take** (aorist imperative = command which conveys a sense of urgency) ([2983](#)) ([lambano](#)) means to take or grasp. It can indicate both benevolent and hostile actions, and have as object either people or things; e.g. take a wife, collect taxes, accept a verdict, take a road, and figuratively take courage.

**Another** ([2087](#)) ([heteros](#)) has the basic meaning of the other of two or more but specifically different. So the idea is qualitatively another of a different kind, and so not identical with what was previously referred to, in this case not another like Judas the betrayer would seem to be the intent of heteros in this context.

**Office** ([1984](#)) ([episkope](#)) from **epí** = upon, perfective use, intensifying already existing idea in verb + **skopeo** = regard, give attention

to) describes the act of watching over with special reference to being present. Therefore it can mean inspection, superintendence, investigation, or visitation. In Acts 1:20 **episkope** refers to a office or position of responsibility of caring for and protecting others. In the next paragraph episkope is used in a technical sense describing the position or function of an ecclesiastical leader.

Note that Peter is quoting from the Septuagint version (not the Hebrew) of Psalm 109:8 which translates **office** (in Hebrew = [pequddah](#)) with the Greek noun [episkope](#).

**Vine** writes that **episkope** "primarily signifies a visiting, or visitation; then, oversight. In this respect the Scripture lays stress not upon the function, but upon the character of the service; not upon the position, but upon devotion to the work."

**Robertson** on **episkope** - Our word *bishoprick* (Acts 1:20KJV) is from this word, office of bishop (πισκοπος [episkopos]). Only that is not the idea here, but over-seership (epi, skopeō) or office as in 1 Peter 2:12. It means to visit and to inspect, to look over. The ecclesiastical sense comes later (1 Ti 3:1).

**Wiersbe** - When the apostle James was martyred, he was not replaced (Acts 12). Why? Because the official witness to Israel was now completed, and the message was going out to Jews and Gentiles alike. There was no more need for twelve apostles to give witness to the twelve tribes of Israel.

**Acts 1:21** "Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us-

KJV Acts 1:21 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

- **Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time** Luke 10:1,2; John 15:27
- **that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us** Numbers 27:17; Deuteronomy 31:2; 2 Samuel 5:2; 1 Kings 3:7; John 10:1-9
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:21-26 Tough Decisions with God's Help](#) - Ray Pritchard

## THE REQUIREMENTS FOR JUDAS' SUCCESSOR

**Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time-** Peter based this declaration of purpose on his interpretation of the Scripture (see Acts 1:20 ±). While they did not yet have the outpouring of the Spirit for His internal guidance, they had the "compass" of the Word of Truth to steer them correctly. This is a good reminder to all of us to stick close to the Bible (and prayer) in making significant life decisions and we of course do have the advantage that the Spirit of Truth now indwells us (Jn 16:13).

**Guzik** gives a good qualifying reminder that "even if we do sense a special guidance from the Holy Spirit, we still have God's voice permanently established in His Word. Any perceived guidance from the Holy Spirit will never disobey God's written Word to us." ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**Paul Apple** - Key Question: Why was it "**necessary**"? This solves the whole issue "therefore" – look in the previous context to see what it is there for = points back to fulfillment of specific prophecy – application to Judas being made by the Holy Spirit

**Constable** - Why did Peter believe it was "**necessary**" to choose someone to take Judas' place? Evidently he remembered Jesus' promise that the 12 disciples would sit on 12 thrones in the messianic kingdom judging the 12 tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30; cf. Rev. 21:14). To be as qualified for this ministry as the other 11 disciples the twelfth had to have met the conditions Peter specified. ([Acts 1 Expository Notes](#))

**It is necessary** (1163) (**dei** from **deo** = to bind or tie objects together, put in prison. Our English - [deontology](#) = science of moral duty) refers to what is not optional but needful (binding) out of intrinsic necessity or inevitability. Uses of **dei** by Luke - Lk. 2:49; Lk. 4:43; Lk. 9:22; Lk. 11:42; Lk. 12:12; Lk. 13:14; Lk. 13:16; Lk. 13:33; Lk. 15:32; Lk. 17:25; Lk. 18:1; Lk. 19:5; Lk. 21:9; Lk. 22:7; Lk. 22:37; Lk. 24:7; Lk. 24:26; Lk. 24:44; Acts 1:16; Acts 1:21; Acts 3:21; Acts 4:12; Acts 5:29; Acts 9:6; Acts 9:16; Acts 14:22; Acts 15:5; Acts

16:30; Acts 17:3; Acts 19:21; Acts 20:35; Acts 23:11; Acts 24:19; Acts 25:10; Acts 25:24; Acts 26:9; Acts 27:21; Acts 27:24; Acts 27:26

**Tannenhill on men who have accompanied us** - In 1:21 Peter speaks not of **being** with Jesus but of **going** with him on his journeys...This emphasis on journeying with Jesus, particularly on his final journey to the cross, suggests that the apostolic witnesses are qualified not simply because they happened to be present when something happened and so could report it, like witnesses to an accident. Rather they have been taught and trained by Jesus for their work. They shared Jesus' life and work during his mission. In the process they were tested and discovered their own defects. That discovery may also be part of their preparation. The witness of the Galileans does not arise from casual observation. They speak out of a life and mission shared with Jesus, after being taught and tested. From this group the replacement for Judas is chosen."

**That the Lord Jesus went in and out among us** - To reiterate, Judas' successor would have had to be an eye witness to the entire 3 year ministry of Jesus. As an aside it is notable that Paul did not meet Peter's requirements for Judas' successor. Therefore Paul could not have been one of the original 12 apostles. And yet Paul was later clearly a God called apostle as Paul Himself testified writing "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God (Eph 1:1+, Col 1:1+), according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus." (2 Ti 1:1+, cf Acts 14:14, 15:2, Ro 1:1+, 1 Cor 1:1, 2 Cor 1:1, Gal 1:1+, Eph 1:1, Col 1:1, 1 Ti 1:1, Titus 1:1)

**Longnecker** - The expression '**went in and out among us**' [NIV] is a Semitic idiom for familiar and unhindered association (cf. Deut 31:2; 2 Sam 3:25; Ps 121:8; Acts 9:28)."

**Vincent on the Lord Jesus went in and out among us** - He came to us and went from us (Knowing), "in the close intimacies of a three years' public life."

**Guzik** has an interesting comment - Whoever replaced Judas must be one who had been with them since John baptized them, who stayed with them during the days of Jesus' earthly ministry, and who saw the resurrected Jesus. We find no evidence that these qualifications were discovered either in the Scriptures or by special leading of the Holy Spirit. We might say that they simply used their sanctified common sense. These seemed to be logical, common sense requirements for the successor to Judas' office as disciple. Their common sense was sanctified because it came as they were in obedience, in fellowship, in prayer, in the Scriptures, and desiring God's will.. This was notable sanctified common sense. It didn't answer everything, but it did narrow it down to two men. ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

**Acts 1:22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us--one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."**

KJV Acts 1:22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

- **Beginning with the baptism of John** Acts 13:24,25; Mt 3:1-17; Mark 1:1,3-8; Luke 3:1-18; John 1:28-51
- **until the day that He was taken up from us** Acts 1:2,9
- **one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection** Acts 1:8; 4:33; John 15:27; Hebrews 2:3
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:21-26 Tough Decisions with God's Help](#) - Ray Pritchard

## THE REQUIREMENTS FOR JUDAS' SUCCESSOR - CONTINUED

**Beginning with the baptism of John** - The ministry of Jesus began with the ministry of John, specifically beginning with the baptism of John and lasted until the Ascension.

And so here Peter continues to lay out the qualification for the new apostle, having stated in v21 that he must be one who accompanied them in their travels and here specifically states the time as when Jesus was baptized anointing Him for His 3 year ministry up until the time of His Ascension. This would obviously include personal encounter with the post-resurrected Jesus.

**Peter** made a similar summary statement of Jesus' ministry (minus reference to the Ascension) in Acts 10 declaring...

You yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, **starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed.** You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how **God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power,** and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. (Acts 10:37-38)

**Until the day that He was taken up from us-** The Ascension (Acts 1:2, Acts 1:9).

**One of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection-** While the time from the baptism of John to the Ascension clearly implies the resurrection, Peter nevertheless emphasizes the importance of this prospective apostle being a witness of His resurrection. Indeed, the Resurrection is the cornerstone of Christianity as Paul clearly explained in First Corinthians...

But **if there is no resurrection of the dead** not even Christ has been raised; 14 and if Christ has not been raised, then **our preaching is vain,** your faith also is vain. 15 Moreover **we are even found to be false witnesses of God,** because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; 17 and **if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.** (1 Cor 15:13-17)

**Robertson** - This Peter considers the essential thing in a successor to Judas. The one chosen should be a personal witness who can speak from his own experience of the ministry, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus. One can easily see that this qualification will soon put an end to those who bear such personal testimony.

**Vincent** - How clearly is the primary office of the apostles here expressed: (1) to testify, from personal observation, to the one great fact of "the resurrection of the Lord Jesus"; (2) to show how this glorified His whole previous life, of which they were constant observers, and established His divine claims.

**Witness (3144)** See preceding discussion of [martus/martys](#). Jesus was no longer physically on earth so it was imperative that this new apostle be one who could testify as an eye witness that Jesus rose from the dead and was alive. And of course while believers are not eyewitnesses of the resurrection or the ascension, we have the Spirit of Christ within us and one of His major objectives it to glorify Christ (Jn 16:14), to give a proper opinion of Christ, especially that He is Alive forevermore! Remember that as you witness of the truth about Christ, always be sure to emphasize that unlike Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed, etc, who are all still dead, our Jesus has been resurrected from the dead. I know from personal experience that there have been times when I was so focused on being a "lawyer" for Jesus and the person to whom I was witnessing left before I ever testified that Christ has been resurrected from the dead (possibly from fear of Acts 17:32!) I now make sure that I testify to them that our Jesus is Alive!

**Resurrection (386)** ([anastasis](#) from **ana** = up, again + **histemi** = to cause to stand) literally means "to stand again" or "to cause to stand again" and most NT uses refer to a physical body rising from the dead or coming back to life after having once died. The **resurrection** is distinguished from belief in reincarnation ([What does the Bible say about reincarnation?](#)), which usually involves a series of rebirths from which the soul may seek release. Resurrection has primary reference to the body. The resurrection is the central, defining doctrine and claim of the Gospel.

**Luke's** uses of **anastasis** - Note frequency in Acts

Lk. 2:34; Lk. 14:14; Lk. 20:27; Lk. 20:33; Lk. 20:35; Lk. 20:36; Acts 1:22; Acts 2:31 (he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ); Acts 4:2 (proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.); Acts 4:33 (with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.); Acts 17:18; Acts 17:32; Acts 23:6; Acts 23:8; Acts 24:15; Acts 24:21; Acts 26:23 (that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.);

**Related Resources:**

- [Why should I believe in Christ's resurrection?](#)
- [Why does it matter that Jesus rose from the dead?](#)
- [Why is the truth of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ so important?](#)
- [Who resurrected Jesus?](#)
- [Where does the saying 'He is risen; He is risen, indeed' come from?](#)
- [Why didn't the disciples always recognize Jesus after His resurrection? How can I avoid being a doubting Thomas?](#)
- [Can the various resurrection accounts from the four Gospels be harmonized?](#)
- [What is the significance of the "folded napkin" in Christ's tomb after the resurrection?](#)
- [Who Moved the Stone?](#) Frank Morson



## Acts 1:23 So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias.

KJV Acts 1:23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

- **So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas** Acts 15:22
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:21-26 Tough Decisions with God's Help](#) - Ray Pritchard

### TWO CANDIDATES TO REPLACE JUDAS

**So they put forward two men** - Someone ("they") nominated two names, Justus and Matthias. Exactly how they arrived at the names is not apparent from the text.

Who is **they** who put forward two men? **Vincent** says "not the Eleven but the whole company, of whom Peter was the spokesman."

**Paul Apple** agrees on the " Identification of the **"they"** as the 120 disciples involved in the evaluating who met the qualifications. Compare Acts 6 where there is input from the congregation in selection of deacons." Compare Acts 15...

Acts 15:22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren,

**Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias** - This is the only mention of these men in the NT. Barsabbas = "son of the Sabbath" – probably born on the Sabbath

**Constable** - Joseph is a Hebrew name, Barsabbas is Aramaic meaning "Son of the Sabbath," and Justus is Roman. Matthias is Hebrew and is a short form of Mattithia. The apostles then prayed for the Lord to indicate which one He chose (cf. Acts 6:6; 13:3; 14:23; 1 Sam. 22:10; 23:2, 4, 10–12) They acknowledged that only God knows people's hearts (1 Sam. 16:7) and did not make the mistake that the Israelites did when they chose King Saul. They wanted God to identify the man after His heart as He had done with David. Next they cast lots probably by drawing one of two designated stones out of a container or by throwing down specially marked objects (cf. Lev. 16:8; Josh. 14:2; 1 Sam. 14:41–42; Neh. 10:34; 11:1; Prov. 16:33). The Lord identified Matthias as His sovereign choice to fulfill the ministry (service) and apostleship (office) of Judas....Casting lots was necessary before the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but when He came He provided the guidance inwardly that God had formerly provided externally. Christians do not need to cast lots to determine God's will since now the indwelling Holy Spirit provides that guidance. He does so objectively through Scripture and subjectively through impressing His will on yielded believers. ([Acts 1 Expository Notes](#))

## Acts 1:24 And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen

KJV Acts 1:24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,

- **And they prayed and said** Acts 13:2,3; Proverbs 3:5,6; Luke 6:12,13
- **You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men** Acts 15:8; Numbers 27:16; 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; 1 Chronicles 28:9; 29:17; Ps 7:9; 44:21; Proverbs 15:11; Jeremiah 11:20; 17:10; 20:12; John 2:24,25; 21:17; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 2:23
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:21-26 Tough Decisions with God's Help](#) - Ray Pritchard

### FIRST RECORDED PUBLIC PRAYER



## IN THE CHURCH

**And they prayed and said** - Presumably all 120, not just the apostles. Yes leaders are to lead out like Peter did, but corporate prayer is critical to support their leadership. Do you pray for your pastor? Do you pray corporately for your pastor? They need our prayers beloved! So if you don't do it now, you need to begin [post haste!](#)

To summarize Peter's requirements for an apostle to replace Judas they had to have been with Jesus the entire 3 years, they had to be a witness of His resurrection (post-resurrection appearances) and finally they had to be chosen by God (cf 2 Ti 1:1 - an apostle by the will of God). And so they resort to prayer to God to seek His guidance in whom they were to choose.

**Prayed** (4336) ([proseuchomai](#) from **pros** = toward, facing, before [emphasizing the direct approach of the one who prays in seeking God's face] + **euchomai** = originally to speak out, utter aloud, express a wish, then to pray or to vow. Greek technical term for invoking a deity) in the NT is always used of prayer addressed to God (to Him as the object of faith and the One who will answer one's prayer) and means to speak consciously (with or without vocalization) to Him, with a definite aim (See preceding discussion of noun [proseuche](#)). **Proseuchomai** encompasses all the aspects of prayer -- submission, confession, petition, supplication (may concern one's own need), intercession (concerned with the needs of others), praise, and thanksgiving. **Proseuchomai** carries with it a notion of **worship** which is not present in the other words for prayer (eg, aiteo, deomai, both of which involve spoken supplication).

**Prayer** clearly is a distinguishing feature of the early church - Acts 2:42 says "They were **continually devoting** themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer (noun)." This begs the question - Is prayer a significant component of your place of worship? If not, something very vital is MISSING! Perhaps God is calling you to begin a prayer ministry at your church, not just praying for physical and fiscal needs but even more praying for spiritual needs (all of Paul's numerous prayers are for spiritual needs and we are commanded to imitate Paul! 1 Cor 11:1-+. How are you doing?).

**Luke's** uses of **proseuchomai** - Prayer is significant in Acts (the noun *proseuche* occurring 9 times and the verb 16 times in Acts and 18 times in the Gospel).

Lk. 1:10; Lk. 3:21; Lk. 5:16; Lk. 6:12; Lk. 6:28; Lk. 9:18; Lk. 9:28; Lk. 9:29; Lk. 11:1; Lk. 11:2; Lk. 18:1; Lk. 18:10; Lk. 18:11; Lk. 20:47; Lk. 22:40; Lk. 22:41; Lk. 22:44; Lk. 22:46; Acts 1:24; Acts 6:6; Acts 8:15; Acts 9:11; Acts 9:40; Acts 10:9; Acts 10:30; Acts 11:5; Acts 12:12; Acts 13:3; Acts 14:23; Acts 16:25; Acts 20:36; Acts 21:5; Acts 22:17; Acts 28:8

**You, Lord** ([kurios](#)) - To Whom are they directing their prayer. While one cannot be dogmatic, their prayer is directed to the Lord Jesus. Peter had just used the name "**the Lord Jesus**" in Acts 1:21 and the apostles questioned Jesus in Acts 1:6 addressing Him as **Lord**. While normally we are instructed to direct our prayer to the Father, clearly there is precedent for directing our prayers to Jesus (cf Stephen in Acts 7:59).

**Who know the hearts of all men** - What a great but also frightening truth. He knows our hearts better than we know our hearts. He knows when we just have the germ of a sinful thought, even if we do not follow through. Therefore it behooves us to live in the atmosphere of continual confession, daily beseeching Him to disclose to us our hearts (Ps 139:23,24)!

Knower of the heart was a favorite expression of post-apostolic Christianity.

**Know the hearts** (2589) ([kardiognostes](#) from **kardia** = heart + **ginóskō** = to know or gnostes = one who knows) describes the One Who knows the heart, the One Who is the Searcher of hearts. Used only here and in Acts 15:8 (Peter addressing the Jerusalem Council declared) "And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us." Only God can see into the secret places of each person's heart. And so, in Acts 1:24, the disciples pray for God's direction in choosing a replacement for Judas. In Acts 15:8, during his address at the Council at Jerusalem, Peter spoke of "God, which knoweth the hearts."

**J D Watson** has a devotional note on **kardiognostes**

Theologians often speak of the attribute of God called 'omniscience,' which means that God knows all things. Twice in Scripture, however, we read of a particular application of omniscience that is sobering indeed. In Acts 1:24 we read, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men." We read again in 15:8, "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us." Amazingly, the words knoweth [or knowest] the hearts are a single word in the Greek, *kardiognōstes*. This word was unknown in both secular Greek and the Septuagint. It's a compound comprised first of *kardia*, which originally referred to the seat of emotions and spirituality but eventually came to mean spiritual and intellectual life. *Gnōskō* means "to know by experience" and often is practically synonymous with love and intimacy. Putting these together, then, the meaning is clear and powerful. God is "the knower of hearts," or simply the "heart-

knower." Throughout Scripture, we're told that God looks into the heart and knows our thoughts and attitudes. While the Greek construction is a little different in Luke 16:15+, the meaning is the same. Our Lord reveals the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and says to them, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." To the church at Thyatira, our Lord (JESUS CHRIST) warned, "I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds." (Rev. 2:23+; cf. Jer. 17:9-10). That is why the Word of God is so important. Since Jesus is the Word who became flesh, His Word is therefore the "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12+). This challenges us to guard our thoughts, attitudes, motives, and all else. Knowing that God sees any pretense, any wrong motive, or any hidden agenda will help us guard our thinking. ([A Word for the Day](#))

**Robertson on who know the hearts** - (See Jn 2:24, 25; 21:15–17; Rev 2:23) They call God the heart-searcher or heart-knower (kardiognōsta, vocative singular), a late word, here and Acts 15:8 only in the NT. Modern physicians have delicate apparatus for studying the human heart.

**Show which one of these two You have chosen** - In their prayer they (rightly) assume that God has made His choice and they only desire to know his will, that which is good and acceptable and pleasing to Him. (Amen)

**Show** (aorist imperative) [322](#)([anadeiknumi](#) from **ana** = emphatic, up, again, back, renewal + **deiknuo** or deiknumi = show) means to to lift up and show, show forth and thus to show plainly or openly (Acts 1:24). To mark out, appoint to an office by some outward sign (Luke 10:1, Lxx = Da 1:11). Used 3x in the Septuagint - Hab 3:2, Da 1:11, Da 1:20. To show forth, to display, to make public, especially a person's appointment to an office. Although **show** is in the imperative mood, prayer is never a demand. It is, rather, a petition to someone who has the superior power and authority to grant the request. The aorist imperative however does express a sense of urgency and asks for a specific act.

**Chosen** ([1586](#))([eklego](#) from **ek** = out, out of, out from + **légo** = select, choose) (see also [eklektos](#)) means literally to select out, single out or choose out of. The idea in **eklego** speaks of the sizable number from which the selection is made. It implies the taking of a smaller number out of a larger. For example, in secular use, Virgil's *Eclogues* (from eklego) are short, selected excerpts taken from a more larger collection of poems. **Eklego** means to choose out for oneself, but not implying rejection of those not chosen. In the present context, there were undoubtedly more than 2 men who met the requirements laid out by Peter, but only 2 were chosen. While those not chosen may have felt rejection in a fleshly sense, the point is that God did not reject them. He simply chose 2 and then chose 1 in His sovereignty and omniscience.

### Acts 1:25 to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place."

KJV Acts 1:25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

- **to occupy this ministry and apostleship** Acts 1:17,20
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:21-26 Tough Decisions with God's Help](#) - Ray Pritchard

## JUDAS' OWN PLACE IS PERMANENTLY IN PERDITION!

**Perdition** - the abode of Satan and the forces of evil (cf Mt 25:41), where unrepentant, Christ rejecting sinners like Judas suffer eternal punishment (cf only two destinies and both permanent - Mt 25:46). See discussion of Eternal Punishment.

**To occupy this ministry and apostleship** - "The assembly described the position as a "place of ministry and apostleship." Jesus declared in his farewell discourse in Luke that the apostles will sit on "thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" as part of the Kingdom (Luke 22:30). The places were set, but Judas by his defection left one vacant. Though divinely determined and predicted, Judas by his own choice experienced the "sorrow" of Luke 22:22. The assembly, under divine guidance, must fill this place. Though the place involves authority and leadership, the one who fills it is to do the service of apostleship (Luke 22:26–27; Acts 6:4). Apostles are servants of God's word for the benefit of the people of God." (Cornerstone Bible Commentary)

**Ministry** (1248) See discussion of [diakonia](#)

**Apostleship** (651) ([apostole](#) from verb [apostello](#) - from [apo](#) = from + [stello](#) = withdraw from) means a sending forth, sending off, sending away, a dispatching. In secular Greek it was used of an expedition. Robertson - "An old word for sending away, then for a release, then the office and dignity of an apostle." (Only used 4x in NT - Acts 1:25; Ro 1:5; 1 Cor. 9:2; Gal. 2:8).

**Longenecker** on **ministry** and **apostleship** - probably a hendiadys (i.e. two connotative words connected by a conjunction that are used to express a single complex idea normally expressed by an adjective and a substantive noun), with the definite article tying the two elements together, and is best translated as "**this apostolic ministry.**"

**Judas turned aside to go to his own place** - "A euphemistic or softened expression of the awful future of the traitor, implying not only destined habitation but congenial element." (Vincent) The NLT paraphrase is direct - "as an apostle to replace Judas in this ministry, for he has deserted us and gone where he belongs."

**Turned aside** (3845) ([parabaino](#) from [pará](#) = beside, beyond, contrary to + [bainō](#) = to walk, to go) means to go beside (walk beside, pass by), to overstep (transgress), to pass over, to let pass, to let slip. Used much more frequently in the Septuagint and especially in the context of transgressing God's covenant and/or commands. To transgress means to pass beyond limits or boundaries.

In secular Greek "the original spatial sense is rare and the most common use is for disregarding statutes, contracts, wills, etc., or breaking one's word. The LXX applies the term to the violation of God's commandments and ordinances, e.g., Ex. 32:8: "turning aside from the right way" (cf. also Dt. 9:12). In Isa. 66:24 God calls backsliders *hoi parabebēkōtes en emoi*. (men Who have transgressed against Me) Other expressions are transgressing God's word (Nu. 14:41) or covenant (Josh. 7:11) and turning aside from his commandments (Dt. 17:20)." (TDNT)

**Thayer** - Homer twice [παρβεβῶς](#) of one who stands by another's side in a war-chariot, Iliad 11,522; 13, 708 (but here of men on foot)); to go past or to pass over without touching a thing; tropically, to overstep, neglect, violate, transgress, with an accusative of the thing

**Parabaino** - 4x in 4v - Turn aside, transgress - Mt 15:2, 3, Acts 1:25, 2 Jn 1:9

Parabaino - 59x in 58v in the Septuagint -

Exod. 32:8; Lev. 26:40; Num. 5:12 ('If any man's wife **goes astray** and is unfaithful to him); Num. 5:19; Num. 5:20; Num. 5:29; Num. 14:41 (Why then are you **transgressing** the commandment of the LORD); Num. 22:18; Num. 24:13; Num. 27:14; Deut. 1:43; Deut. 9:12; Deut. 9:16; Deut. 11:16; Deut. 17:20; Deut. 28:14; Jos. 7:11 ("Israel has sinned, and they have also **transgressed** My covenant which I commanded them.); Jos. 7:15; Jos. 11:15; Jos. 23:16; 1 Sam. 12:21; 1 Sam. 15:24; 2 Ki. 18:12; Job 14:17; Ps. 119:119; Isa. 24:5; Isa. 66:24; Jer. 5:28; Ezek. 16:59; Ezek. 17:15; Ezek. 17:16; Ezek. 17:18; Ezek. 17:19; Ezek. 44:7; Dan. 9:5 (we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even **turning aside** from Your commandments and ordinances.); Dan. 9:11; Hos. 6:7; Hos. 8:1

Ex 32:8 "They have quickly **turned aside** (Lxx = parabaino) from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it and have sacrificed to it and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!'"

Isaiah 66:24 (DESCRIBES JUDAS "OWN PLACE") "Then they will go forth and look On the corpses of the men (LIKE JUDAS WHO TURNED ASIDE) Who have **transgressed** (Lxx = parabaino) against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not be quenched; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind."

Hosea 6:7 But like Adam they have **transgressed** (Lxx = parabaino) the covenant; There they have dealt treacherously against Me.

**Longenecker** on **to go to his own place** - The phrase "to go where he belongs" (or "to go to his own place") is likely a euphemism for "to go to hell" (cf. Str-B, 4.2.1097-98), which shows the awfulness of Judas's fate spiritually (cf. vv. 18-19). (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

**Ray Pritchard** asks "**Where is Judas today? Is he in heaven or is he in hell?**" The Bible is very clear on that point: Judas is in hell. In Acts 1:25, Peter spoke of Judas who left his apostolic ministry "to go where he belongs." Literally, the verse reads "to go to his own place." "His own place" is hell. If that seems harsh, consider the words of Jesus in John 6:70-71 when "Jesus answered them, "Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?" Now He meant Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him." He did not literally mean that Judas was a demon, but that Judas was even then (about a year before the crucifixion) acting under Satan's influence. Judas is in hell today. He has been there for 2,000 years and he

will be there forever. He has paid the ultimate price for the crime of betraying the Son of God. If someone asks, "Did Judas lose his salvation?" the answer is No. He didn't lose his salvation because he never had it. Whatever else you can say about him, he was never a follower of Jesus Christ in the same sense as the other apostles. He was not saved and then lost. He was lost because he was never saved in the first place. But someone else may ask, "Did Judas go to hell because he committed suicide?" Good question, and the answer is once again No. Suicide is a sin, but it is not why Judas went to hell. Judas went to hell because he never truly committed himself to Jesus Christ. His betrayal proved that fact; his suicide merely sealed his fate. One final question. "Doesn't the Bible say that Judas 'repented?'" The older translations do indeed use that word in Matthew 27:3. A more accurate rendering is "seized with remorse." Although Judas was gripped with the wrongness of what he had done, he never asked for forgiveness. There is a world of difference between those two things. Many people who truly feel sorry for their sins never come to God and ask for forgiveness. Judas tried to undo his betrayal, but it was too late. I do not doubt that he wept bitter tears as he threw the money back into the temple. But his remorse (as sincere as it was) was not true repentance and it did not lead to forgiveness. It led instead to suicide, the ultimate proof that Judas died an unforgiven man." (Read the entire sermon [Acts 1:15-26 What Happened to Judas](#))

**Pritchard** applies this tragic story of Judas to the modern church noting that "If Judas were alive today, the best place to find him would be in church on Sunday morning. He would come early, sit near the front, sing the hymns with gusto, clap during the choruses, and say "Amen" during the sermon!"

**NET Note on his own place** - This may well be a euphemism for Judas' judged fate. He separated himself from them, and thus separated he would remain.

**Robertson - To his own place** - A bold and picturesque description of the destiny of Judas worthy of Dante's Inferno. There is no doubt in Peter's mind of the destiny of Judas nor of his own guilt. He made ready his own berth and went to it.

**MacArthur** makes an interesting statement on Judas going **to his own place** - The last phrase is a shocking and sobering statement. Judas, and all others who go to hell, belong there; it is the place of their own choosing. It belongs to them, and they to it!

---

**Ray Pritchard - Are You a Second Judas?** Many years ago I heard an evangelist preach a sermon with the arresting title: "A Second Judas." It was aimed at church members who were not truly born again. As I recall, he told the story of Judas and then talked about himself—how he had grown up in the church, attended Sunday School for years, gone to a Christian college—and if my memory serves me correctly—had even become a pastor before he realized that he had never truly been born again. He himself had been a second Judas. It was humbling and painful for him to face the fact of his own self-deception, but when he did, he was wonderfully converted by the Spirit of God.

It can happen to any of us. Judas kissed the door of heaven but went to hell. Jesus picked him as an apostle but he went to hell. He lived with Jesus for three years and still went to hell. He watched Jesus walk on the water and still went to hell. He listened to the Sermon on the Mount and still went to hell. He ate with Jesus, talked with Jesus, walked with Jesus, and listened to Jesus day after day, month after month, year after year. He knew Jesus as well as one has ever known Jesus and still he went to hell. And remember this. None of the disciples suspected him. That's why he was chosen to be the treasurer. They trusted him to keep their money. Even at the Last Supper, when Jesus identified Judas publicly, they still couldn't figure it out.

Do you know who is most likely to be a Judas in this church? I am. As the Senior Pastor, I stand in the closest analogy to the place where Judas stood. Someone says, "Surely not you, Pastor." That's what they said about Judas. Remember, the shock of Judas' betrayal was that he looked so good on the outside. If I can tell you this story without searching my own heart, then I have missed the point.

I want you to know that I truly believe in the [assurance of salvation through the Word of God and the testimony of the Holy Spirit](#) I'm not in favor of constant introspection about whether or not you are a Christian. But there is a place for healthy self-examination in the Christian life (cf 2 Corinthians 13:5-+). No one should take for granted his hope of heaven. I wish to say clearly that as I have considered the matter this week, the thought occurs to me that if I am a Christian at all, it is not because I am a pastor, an elder, a church member, a husband, a father, or a doer of good deeds. None of those things matter in the least when it comes to eternal salvation. If I am a Christian at all, it is because I am trusting in Jesus Christ and him alone for the forgiveness of my sins. I'm staking my hope of heaven on the fact that Jesus died for me and rose from the dead. If he can't take me to heaven, then I'm not going there. **Judas does us a favor if his story causes us to rethink our basic commitment to Jesus Christ. You call yourself a Christian. But are you a true follower or are you just going through the motions? Are you a pretender or a true believer? Have you truly turned from your sins and trusted Jesus Christ as Savior? Are you a fair-weather friend of the Savior?**

These are searching questions that may be easier to ask than to answer. I ask you not to take them lightly. The one main lesson from Judas' life is lost unless we at least ask ourselves the questions. After all, if one can be an apostle of Christ and still be lost, what about you and what about me? Perhaps we may conclude the matter this way. One apostle was lost, that none should

presume. Eleven were saved, that none should despair. In the end, most of us who call ourselves Christians will search our hearts and conclude that Yes, although we fail him in many ways, we do love Jesus and claim him as our Savior. That is as it should be. The story of Judas is in the Bible for many reasons, not the least of which is that before we take anything for granted, we at least ask the question the other apostles asked that fateful night: "Lord, is it I?" (Read the entire sermon [Acts 1:15-26 What Happened to Judas](#))

**Acts 1:26 And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.**

KJV Acts 1:26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

- **And they drew lots for them** Acts 13:19; Leviticus 16:8; Joshua 18:10; 1 Samuel 14:41,42; 1 Chronicles 24:5; Proverbs 16:22; Jonah 1:7
- Acts Video - [Matthias Chosen](#)
- Acts 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#) - Steven Cole
- [Acts 1:12-26 Resources for Finishing Our Lord's Unfinished Work--3](#) - John MacArthur
- [Acts 1:21-26 Tough Decisions with God's Help](#) - Ray Pritchard

## THE LAST NT MENTION OF CASTING LOTS

**And they drew lots for them** - Casting lots was an accepted OT practice for determining God's will, but before you cast lots to determine God's will, you need to realize that this was the last occurrence of this practice in the Bible. Now we have the full revelation of God's Word and God's indwelling Spirit to guide our discernment of God's will. Wise counsel and circumstantial occurrences can help some but our primary mode of determining God's will needs to be His Word, His Spirit and prayer using the Word and in the Spirit.

The only other NT use of casting lots is by pagan Roman soldiers in Mt 27:35 (cf Mk 15:24, Lk 23:34, Jn 19:24) alluding to Psalm 22:18

And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves by **casting lots**.

In contrast to the pagan casting of lots, Luke describes a pious casting of lots, bathed in prayer and based on the Word (the OT prophetic passages quoted by Peter). Keep in mind these were all Jews and casting of lots was deeply rooted in their Jewish culture (Josh 19:24, 1 Chr 6:65, et al). In Pr 18:18 we see that "The cast lot puts an end to strife And decides between the mighty ones." Thus lots were used to resolve disputes in Ancient Israel. Here these Jewish believers are using this modality to reveal God's choice of Judas' successor.

**Longnecker on drew lots for them** - The Greek literally reads, "They gave lots to them" (edōkan klērous autois)—a Hebrew idiom for "casting" or "throwing" down various kinds of marked objects in order to determine God's will. The practice was common within Israel and the ancient world generally and is probably best illustrated by Proverbs 16:33: "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD." So by the appointment of Christ himself, the full complement of apostles was restored and the church was ready for the coming of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of its mission. (Ibid)

**Paul Apple** - Look at the theology of the hymns we sing – **do we really believe what we are singing?**

### **He leadeth me, O blessed thought!**

O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!

Whate'er I do, where'er I be

Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Refrain:

He leadeth me, He leadeth me,

By His own hand He leadeth me;

His faithful foll'wer I would be,

For by His hand He leadeth me.

Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,



Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,  
By waters still, o'er troubled sea,  
Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me.

Lord, I would place my hand in Thine,  
Nor ever murmur nor repine;  
Content, whatever lot I see,  
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me.

><>><><>

**Guide me, O Thou great \*Jehovah,**

Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,  
Hold me with Thy pow'ful hand.  
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,  
Feed me till I want no more;  
Feed me till I want no more.

**Solomon** describes the OT practice

"The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD." (Pr 16:33)

**Comment:** Note the important phrase "its every decision" - This means that nothing in life happens by chance, not even which stone falls out of the jar first. Even the random events of life come under God's divine control. "that what is attributed to chance, fate, luck, or coincidence is determined by God." As Albert Einstein put it in objecting to quantum theory's use of probability mathematics, "God does not play dice with the universe." See other OT examples Lev. 16:8ff.; Nu 26:55ff.; Josh 7:14; 1 Sa 10:20; 14:41ff.; Pr. 18:18

See also Charles Bridges' [commentary on Proverbs 16:33](#)

**Cornerstone Bible Commentary-** In this process, each candidate's name was written on a stone that was placed in a container. The container was shaken and turned upside down until one of the stones sprang or fell out, thus indicating the Lord's choice

**Lots...lot** (2819) See [kleros](#) above.

**Casting lots** (In Secular Greek Culture) - In governance, [sortition](#) (also known as allotment or demarchy) selects political officials as a random sample from a larger pool of candidates. The logic behind the sortition process originates from the idea that "power corrupts." For that reason, when the time came to choose individuals to be assigned to empowering positions, the ancient Athenians resorted to choosing by lot.

**The lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles-** This is all we know of Matthias. Tradition says he was martyred as were all except John. The monument to Virginia's unknown Confederate dead bears this inscription: "Who they were none knows, what they were all know."

**Constable** addresses the question - Was Peter correct in leading the believers to recognize a twelfth apostle, or did God intend Paul to be the replacement? Paul was, of course, an apostle with authority equal to that of the Twelve. However, Paul had not been with Jesus during His earthly ministry. Luke, Paul's friend, spoke of the Twelve without equivocation as an official group (Acts 2:14; 6:2). Furthermore the distinctly Jewish nature of the future ministry of the Twelve (Matt. 19:28) supports Paul's exclusion from this group. His ministry was primarily to the Gentiles (Gal. 2:9). Paul never claimed to be one of the Twelve, though he did contend that his official apostleship had come to him as a direct commission from the Lord. However, it came from the risen Lord, and he considered himself abnormally born as an apostle (1 Cor. 15:7-8). Finally, there is no hint in Scripture that the decision made on this occasion was a mistake. ([Acts 1 Expository Notes](#))

**John Stott** - The stage is now set for the Day of Pentecost. The apostles have received Christ's commission and seen his ascension. The apostolic team is complete again, ready to be his chosen witnesses. Only one thing is missing: the Spirit has not yet come. Though the place left vacant by Judas has been filled by Matthias, the place left vacant by Jesus has not yet been filled by the Spirit. So we leave Luke's first chapter of the Acts with the 120 waiting in Jerusalem, persevering in prayer with one heart and mind, poised ready to fulfil Christ's command just as soon as he has fulfilled his promise. ([The Message of Acts](#))

**Guzik** has a good application comment - No one can fault all the things they did before they cast lots. We must believe that all these things put them into the place where God would truly guide their decision. We would not make many wrong decisions if we did all the



things the disciples did before making big decisions. ([Acts 1 Commentary](#))

- The disciples obeyed.
- The disciples were in unity and fellowship.
- The disciples were in prayer.
- The disciples were in the Scriptures.
- The disciples wanted to do God's will.
- The disciples used sanctified common sense.
- The disciples did what Jesus did.
- The disciples did what they could do to rely on God.

**Ray Pritchard** - Over the centuries some Bible commentators have wondered whether or not this was a legitimate election. Some people argue that casting lots was inappropriate because it belonged to the Old Testament (true, but irrelevant). It's true that we have no further record of casting lots in New Testament—which may or may not be significant. Others note that Matthias is never mentioned again (true, but most of the apostles are never mentioned again). Some people say that the Apostle Paul took the place of Judas (not true—1 Corinthians 15:5 makes it clear that he considered himself an apostle but not one of "the twelve.") There is nothing in the text to suggest that Peter and the disciples made a mistake. What happened was simple and biblical. They had a vacancy, Peter made a speech, the people nominated two men, Peter prayed, they rolled the dice, and Matthias was chosen as an apostle. I believe Matthias was just as much an apostle as Peter or James or John. ([Acts 1:21-26 Tough Decisions with God's Help](#))

**Steven Cole** - Some Christians have used this method, but I would not recommend it. I would point out that if you do use it, you can't go for two out of three if you don't like the first result! You have to submit to God's will as revealed the first time! That's what the apostles did here. They weren't voting for their favorite candidate. They were submissive to God's will. They let Jesus, who chose the original twelve (Acts 1:2), choose Judas' replacement. ([Acts 1:12-26 Why Christianity is Credible](#))

**J Vernon McGee** - Matthew concludes with the Resurrection, Mark with the Ascension, Luke with the promise of the Holy Spirit, and John with the promise of the Second Coming. Acts 1 brings all four records together and mentions each of them. The four Gospels funnel into Acts, and Acts is the bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles.

#### Related Resource:

- [What was the practice of casting lots?](#)
- [Was Matthias or Paul God's choice to replace Judas as the 12th apostle?](#)
- [How can I know God's will for my life?](#)
- [What is divine providence?](#)
- [Is it true that everything happens for a reason?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about fate / destiny?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about luck?](#)
- [The Providence of God](#)
- [The Will Of God](#)
- [Proverbs 16:33 God is the Disposer of All Events](#)

---

#### Proverbs 16:33a He Is In Control

Flipping a coin, drawing straws, or taking a number out of a hat have long been ways of resolving disputes. I once read of an election in an Oklahoma town where the two leading candidates each received 140 votes. Rather than go through the expense of another election, city officials used a chance method to decide the winner, and everyone accepted the outcome. What the writer of Proverbs said proved to be true: "Casting lots causes contentions to cease, and keeps the mighty apart" (Prov. 18:18).

Many people view all of this as nothing more than a matter of chance. But the amazing thing about what the Word of God calls "casting lots" is that the Lord is ultimately the One who controls the outcome. This was true in the story of Jonah, where God showed Himself to be Lord even through the actions of superstitious, unbelieving sailors.

So, what does all of this say to us as believers? From the Christian's perspective, there is no such thing as chance. God is either directly or indirectly involved in everything that happens to us. He can therefore be trusted and obeyed in any circumstance, because even the smallest details are under His control. —Mart De Haan ( [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Things don't just happen to those who love God,

They're planned by His own dear hand,  
Then molded and shaped, and timed by His clock;  
Things don't just happen--they're planned.  
--Fields

**God is behind the scenes and controls the scenes He is behind.**

---

**Proverbs 16:33** Spurgeon - Morning and evening

If the disposal of the lot is the Lord's whose is the arrangement of our whole life? If the simple casting of a lot is guided by him, how much more the events of our entire life—especially when we are told by our blessed Saviour: "The very hairs of your head are all numbered: not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father." It would bring a holy calm over your mind, dear friend, if you were always to remember this. It would so relieve your mind from anxiety, that you would be the better able to walk in patience, quiet, and cheerfulness as a Christian should. When a man is anxious he cannot pray with faith; when he is troubled about the world, he cannot serve his Master, his thoughts are serving himself. If you would "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," all things would then be added unto you. You are meddling with Christ's business, and neglecting your own when you fret about your lot and circumstances. You have been trying "providing" work and forgetting that it is yours to obey. Be wise and attend to the obeying, and let Christ manage the providing. Come and survey your Father's storehouse, and ask whether he will let you starve while he has laid up so great an abundance in his garner? Look at his heart of mercy; see if that can ever prove unkind! Look at his inscrutable wisdom; see if that will ever be at fault. Above all, look up to Jesus Christ your Intercessor, and ask yourself, while he pleads, can your Father deal ungraciously with you? If he remembers even sparrows, will he forget one of the least of his poor children? "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee. He will never suffer the righteous to be moved."

---

**Adrian Rogers** - You can't say, "Lord, show me Your will for my life — and then I'll make up my mind whether I want to do it." You just simply hand God a blank sheet of paper, sign your name at the bottom, and say, "Lord, You fill in the details."

---

**Ray Pritchard** - What do we learn from this passage about how to make a tough decision? Here are six steps you need to take when you've got to choose and you don't know which way to go.

1. Seek godly counsel.
2. Search the Scriptures
3. List your options
4. Pray for God's guidance
5. Make the best decision you can
6. Move on and leave the results with God

If you do the first four, when the time comes to make the decision, you can do what you think is best and then just move on down the road, trusting God to take care of the results. In essence this is what Proverbs 3:6 means when it says that God will direct your paths. If you trust him with your decisions, he will lead you step by step exactly where he wants you to go. It may not be easy or painless, and you'll go through days of uncertainty and nights of doubt, but in the end, the God who makes his will known in Acts 1 will make his will known to you.

But what if you make a decision and you later conclude you made a mistake? My answer is this: If your heart is set on obeying God and your will is surrendered to him, that can't happen. One footnote to that: Your decisions may not always work out the way you want—or expect—and sometimes they will blow up in your face. But a bad (or even negative) result doesn't necessarily mean you made a mistake. Many "good" decisions often have "bad" results, humanly speaking—even decisions made in the will of God. Those "bad" results are simply part of God's plan for your life—part of his step-by-step training process to make you like Jesus. ([Acts 1:21-26 Tough Decisions with God's Help](#))