

SERIES: Transition Time

SUBJECT: From Jesus' presence to Jesus' power

READING: **Act 1:1-8** *The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, (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: (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: (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. (5) For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. (6) When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? (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. (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.*

Introduction:

Acts is a transition book as God pivots from the Law to Grace. The Gospels are the life of Christ, His ministry to the lame and blind, His message to sinners like Zacchaeus was **And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. (10) For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.** Luk 19:9-10

To sinners who everyone condemned like the woman taken in adultery whom the religious crowd wanted to stone to death; *So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. (8) And again he stooped down,*

and wrote on the ground. (9) And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. (10) When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, *Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?* (11) She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, *Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.* Joh 8:7-11

Even on the cross with a thief on either side of Him His message was one of hope and forgiveness; *And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. (40) But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? (41) And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. (42) And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. (43) And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.* Luk 23:39-43

But even more important, Luke had to build a bridge between his Gospel and the work of Christ to the church of Christ and their continuing of Christ's work!

This begins with His post resurrection appearances Act 1:1-3 *The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, (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: (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:* The purpose of these appearances was to clear up any disbelief concerning His resurrection from the dead.

These appearances culminate in the upper room where they were assembled as He had instructed. The purpose was preparation for the next phase of work Christ had begun; Act 1:4-5 *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. (5) For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*

At the close of the Gospels the disciples and even the Apostles were unprepared to carry on the Work of Christ. Their preparation begins here.

They needed God's power once Jesus' presence was gone and it is coming but they must wait for that power to be given by God; *, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.*

They are looking and expecting Christ to establish His earthly Kingdom; Act 1:6-7 *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? (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.*

- Throughout the church's history it has been looking for and hoping for Christ's return to set up His earthly Kingdom!
- We beloved are no exception as we sit here today hoping and praying that today we might hear the shout and the voice of the arch angel!
- No matter how much we want it and look for it God is the only one who knows!

So like those in the upper room we are still waiting still being asked to carry out Christ's primary; They also needed to have their future ministry confirmed;

**Act 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.

No other part of Christ's ministry is possible if this part is not being pursued;

**Mat 28:19-20** Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

Teaching all nations involves reaching the lost with the Gospel of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection!

If that is not continued the second part of Christ's instruction will soon starve for those to teach;  
*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

In desperation today's church has sought ways to bring the lost to Christ that compromise Christ's very ministry.

This same desperation has forced even good churches like ours to teach truth's already know from a different perspective because there are no lost being brought into the church.

So as we as a church now turn to Acts transition from Christ's Presence to Christ's power! **But ye shall**

receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:

We have that power what we need to do is see how the early church unleashed that power through its ministry. **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**

- We need to learn what that power is and how exercise it beginning with our daily lives!
- Here is an important key; . **and ye shall be witnesses!**
- Before we learn the Romans road or the ABC's of salvation we need to understand the power of the witness of our own life.
  - When I was at the hospice house with Bob Lafferty yesterday God gave me an illustration through the witness of an aide who was about to give bob a bath.
  - She is involved in what she described as a Cowboy Church;

Cowboy churches are local Christian churches within the cowboy culture that are distinctively Western heritage in character. A typical cowboy church may meet in a rural setting in a barn, metal building, arena, sale barn, or old western building, have its own rodeo arena, and a country gospel band.

- The thing that interested me was how excited she was about their outreach to the others the traditional church has ignored.

- Her excitement was palpable; She had tattoos visible which seemed to confirm that she was one of those she was excited about reaching.
- Each of us need to be reminded that our most effective soul winning plan is our own testimony!
  - We know it by heart.
  - We can attest to its validity.
  - We are evidence of its effectiveness.
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- Beloved when is the last time you said to a lost person let me tell you what Christ has done for me?

The assurance of His coming again is the subject of (vv. 9-11).

*Act 1:9-11 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. (10) And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; (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.*

Christ's ascension into heaven was an important part of His ministry, for if He had not returned to the Father, He could not have sent the promised gift of the Holy Spirit which He promised and which Acts chronicles!

- Also, in heaven today, the Saviour is our interceding High Priest, giving us the grace that we need for life and service (Heb. 4:14-16).

- He is also our Advocate before the Father, forgiving us when we confess our sins (1 John 1:9-2:2).
- The exalted and glorified Head of the church is now working with His people on earth and helping them accomplish His purposes (Mark 16:19-20).

**Mar 16:19-20** So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. (20) And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

**As the believers watched Jesus being taken up to glory, two angels appeared and gently rebuked them.**

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). The angels are the servants of the saints (Heb. 1:14).

The two messengers gave the believers assurance that Jesus Christ would come again, just as He had been taken from them.

- This seems to refer to His public "coming in clouds" (Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Rev. 1:7) rather than to His coming for His church "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thes. 4:13-18).
- Regardless of what views different people may take of God's prophetic program, Christians agree that Jesus is coming again and that He can come at any time. This in itself is a great motivation for faithful Christian service (Luke 12:34-48).