

**"Beyond Conviction and Knowledge"**

1/20-21/07

6 p.m.; 9 &amp; 10:45 a.m.

Acts 1:3-5

(Second message in the series, *"When God Has More in Mind"*)**OPEN** to Acts 1:1-5 (**PAGE** 1690)**INTRODUCTION**

This week I received what I'm going to read to you. It is written by someone who is a part of our congregation:

"In early December my wife and I received a telephone call from my uncle letting us know that my cousin had been admitted to the hospital two weeks prior and had taken a turn for the worse.

We finished what we were doing and went to the hospital to see Rick. He was asleep when we arrived which was good because I was not prepared for what I saw. Rick's liver was failing and he was extremely jaundiced. We opted not to wake him and left, thinking that we would simply come back at a later time.

The next day was an ordinary Sunday for us, Sunday school then church service. As the service was nearing its end, I began to think about Rick. As my wife and I were driving home I mentioned stopping by the hospital, but we were both hungry and decided to go home instead.

With lunch over Rick kept coming to mind and try as I might, it was difficult to concentrate on what I was doing as it became more and more clear that I had to go back to the hospital. I told my wife how I was feeling and she agreed we needed to go. Rick's parents and sister were there when we arrived and Rick was awake and alert.

Rick had attended church as a youth, but I knew nothing about his spiritual life. His dad wasn't sure either. By this time I knew why I was so unsettled. God wanted me to introduce Rick to Jesus.

As I approached his bed the attending nurses came in and did their usual checks and I lost my nerve. Time passed slowly as I pondered what I was going to do. Quick silent

prayers on my part for courage prevailed and I started toward Rick's bed again, only to be deterred by the arrival of one of his brothers and sister-in-law. Again, I lost my nerve and stepped away from the bed feeling anxious and frustrated.

Finally it boiled down to "now or never". I knelt beside Rick's bed, took his hand and asked him to squeeze it. I wanted to know how strong he was, as Rick was not able to speak. As I prayed and asked Rick to squeeze my hand if he understood, he did. As I led him through a prayer of confession, he squeezed my hand every time I asked, confirming what he was unable to speak. As he accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord, he squeezed my hand acknowledging what he could not verbalize. During those moments I was unaware that the others in the room had stopped talking and formed a circle around the bed and that my wife's hand had been on my shoulder the entire time, silently praying, silently encouraging me.

Rick passed away the following evening and heaven was changed for all eternity!

When Jesus came to earth, He had Rick in mind. As Jesus was suffering upon the cross, He bore Rick's sins and paid the penalty for them. And when Jesus rose from death, He showed He was more powerful than sin and death, and made it possible for Rick... and for all of us... to experience eternal life in heaven."

Today, as we return to Acts 1, we're going to see three essential elements that Jesus concentrated upon so that after He ascended into heaven, His apostles would be fully equipped to share with the world what He had done... and take that message to everyone in the world.

These three essential elements apply to you and me as well, because we're continuing with the mission Jesus gave.

**READ** Acts 1:1-5

To fulfill the mission Jesus' gave us, we must...

**I. Develop Personal Conviction About the Resurrection of Jesus Christ** (v. 3a)

Acts 1:3a **"After His suffering, He showed Himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive."**

The word **"proofs"** (*tekm̄niois*)... speaks of verifiable evidence as opposed to evidence provided by witnesses.

Jesus made the case for His resurrection with physical evidence. FACTS. (Crime Scene Investigators)

The Resurrection was proven by touching, seeing, and hearing Jesus' resurrection body. (cf. Luke 24:39-40; 1 John 1:1).

#### A. The evidence for Jesus' resurrection

- John 20:1-9: Peter and John saw the empty tomb where Jesus had been.
- Luke 24:37-40: Jesus showed the disciples His hands and feet: wounds from the cross.
- Luke 24:41-43: Jesus ate food in their presence (not a spirit).
- 1 Cor. 15:6: Jesus appeared to more than 500 different people to demonstrate His resurrection.

You see, Jesus knew the importance of the 12 being fully convinced of His resurrection from death.

Whether people would believe them or not was not the first issue. The first issue was that the 12 were convinced by what they saw, touched, heard, over 40 days and many different encounters in several different settings.

And the apostles became so convinced that all but one died a martyr's death, refusing to recant what they knew was true about Jesus.

Evidence, facts, are essential and Jesus made sure that the apostles had such material evidence.

#### B. We need to develop our conviction of Jesus' Resurrection

*If Jesus wasn't raised from death, we're still in our sins and everything we believe is a lie! (1 Cor. 15)*

1. Biblical/historical information

Eye witness accounts in the Scriptures

Read "More than a Carpenter" by Josh McDowell

Read "The Case for the Resurrection" by Lee Strobel.

2. Personal experience with Jesus

- If He isn't alive, how can we have a relationship with Him now?

So, to fulfill the mission Jesus' gave us, we must...

**I. Develop Personal Conviction About the Resurrection of Jesus Christ** (v. 3a)

To fulfill the mission Jesus' gave us, we must...

**II. Develop a Clear Understanding of the Kingdom of God**  
(v. 3b)

Acts 1:3b "He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God."

A. The disciples needed to understand the Kingdom of God

In some of Jesus' last words, we find some essentials of understanding the Kingdom of God:

Matthew 28:18-20

- 28:18: "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.'"

*Jesus is King, holding all authority.*

- 28:19a: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,

*His kingdom is to encompass all peoples of the earth.*

- 28:19b: **"baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,**  
*Every follower of the King is to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*
  
- 28:20a: **"and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."**  
*Obedience to all Jesus' commands is to be taught, learned and practiced.*
  
- 28:20b: **"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"**  
*The King supports His people and lives amongst them.*

B. We need to understand the Kingdom of God  
The heart of the Kingdom is the King!

Around the King are gathered the King's sons and daughters, servants and warriors, teachers and leaders, fully devoted to the King and His will...

... and growing in their understanding of the King and His Kingdom's work!

We must know the King! Maintain a vital relationship with Him through personal time in His word and prayer and obedience. Have a vital connection with the Body of Christ, the local church to which He has called you.

We must know the King's will! Pursue understanding God's Kingdom through His word! Study, small group, Sunday teaching, Sunday preaching.

We need conviction regarding the resurrection.

We need to have a growing understanding of the K. of God.

But, that is not enough.

**Knowledge** can convince, **Conviction** can lead to action, but we need more. We need the personal activity and power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

To fulfill the mission Jesus' gave us, we must...

### **III. Develop Reliance Upon the Holy Spirit** (v. 4-5)

Acts 1:4-5 "On one occasion, while He was eating with them, He gave them this command: 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about.

5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'"

#### A. Wait for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

To be "**baptized**" means to be dipped or immersed. It can refer to water baptism, which is one reason we baptize the way we do (immersion).

"**baptized**" can also refer to being overwhelmed by events and experiences:

Mark 10:38 "Are you able... to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?"

i.e., "Can you go through what I'm about to go through? Can you suffer the way I'm going to suffer?"

Jesus was immersed in suffering; i.e. baptized in suffering.

"baptized" also refers to being **baptized with the Holy Spirit**. It means to be immersed in Him.

This happens when we receive Christ:

1 Corinthians 12:13 "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body... and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."

When we believe in Jesus, we become a part of the Body of Christ. So, if we are **baptized by the Spirit** into the Body of Christ, it appears that **Spirit baptism** happens when we receive Christ.

Now, being "**filled**" with the Holy Spirit happens time after time after time. In fact, it is commanded to all Christians to "**be filled with the Spirit**" AND there are times the Spirit fills believers at His own initiative to prepare them for some act of service.

Since the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out, Jesus told the apostles to wait to go on their mission of proclaiming Jesus as Messiah until they were **baptized with the Holy Spirit.**

Here's some of the reasons why:

1. The Holy Spirit's presence is of greater benefit than Jesus' physical presence (John 16:7)

John 16:7 "But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."

"for your good:" "to your advantage, profit, better"

The indwelling, continual presence of the Holy Spirit is of greater benefit than the physical presence of Jesus.

2. The Holy Spirit is our Helper (John 14:16-17a)

John 14:16-17a "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth."

"another:" another of like kind

"Counselor:" Helper, Comforter, Advocate

3. The Holy Spirit teaches and reminds us (John 14:26)

John 14:26 **"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."**

(cf. Luke 12:12, 1 Corinthians 2:13)

**"teach:"** This often happens in context of the Word of God: reading, hearing, meditating, memorizing, studying, group discussion.

**"remind:"** He takes that which we have learned and brings it to mind when we need it: witnessing, when temptation strikes, encouraging someone, etc.

4. The Holy Spirit guides us into all truth (John 16:13a)

John 16:13a **"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth."**

(cf. 1 Corinthians 2:12)

It's like a guide leading a tourist or a hunter through territory that is unknown to the one being lead, but fully known to the guide.

Just as a guide leads to a destination, the Holy Spirit guides us into all the truth God has for us to know.

5. The Holy Spirit encourages and confirms our relationship with God the Father (Romans 8:15-16)

Romans 8:15-16 **"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'"**

16 **The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children."**

- **slavery** contrasted with **sonship, children**

- **fear** contrasted with warm love and confidence

- the **Holy Spirit** affirming to **our spirit** that we are God's own children.

## ILLUSTRATION

When I was a new Christian, maybe two to four months old in the Lord, I picked up a hitchhiker as I left Arizona State University one day. (In those days it was safe to pick up hitchhikers!)

I asked if he was a student at ASU and he said, "yes." He asked my major and I said, "Journalism. And yours?" He said, "Philosophy... and Physical Education." An odd combination that he explained to me. Then he asked, "Are you into philosophy?" I replied, "I'm into Jesus." He said, "Tell me about it."

So, I explained how I had been religious, and lived a worldly life for a few years, and then I asked Jesus into my life. I told him how it happened and the changes He was making in my life.

He started asking me questions, which I answered. But, as I was answering, I was amazed at the answers that were coming from my mouth. As I said, I was a very new Christian, but the Holy Spirit was guiding me and He was putting in my mind things I'd learned from the Bible, and the answers were satisfying his questions.

Then he asked one question and I responded, "I don't really know." He said, "Come on, man! Don't give up now! You're doing good!" And the Holy Spirit gave me an answer, that, again, satisfied him.

At the time, I didn't know about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. But, looking back, I see how He guided me into truth, reminded me of things I'd learned or read from the Bible, and, at times, just gave me an answer. He still does the same today.

No amount of Bible knowledge or conviction can replace the Holy Spirit! We cannot become so mature and knowledgeable that we no longer need Him! We must always, continually, empty ourselves of self will, and allow Him to fill us, direct us, empower us. We are the vessels. He will fill us and work through us!

Knowledge can convince, Conviction can lead to action, but we need more. We need the personal activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Have you opened your life to Jesus? You may have knowledge of the Bible and conviction about what it says. But, have you opened your life to Jesus? Have you surrendered to Him? Have you asked Him to forgive your sins, remove your guilt, and come to live within you? He will do that if you sincerely turn to Him and ask.

If you have opened your life to Jesus, are you filled with the Holy Spirit? Do you live your life setting aside your own will and asking Him to fill you afresh with His personal presence and life? Will you make this choice?

*"Lord Jesus Christ, please come into my life and forgive me for my self-centered life and sin. I surrender to You. Please fill me with the Holy Spirit and direct my life in the ways you desire. I need You! In Jesus' Name, Amen."*

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