

**Acts: The Spirit, the Church and the Spread of God's Word**

## **The Promise of Power**

**Acts 1:1-8**

*Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / May 5, 2019*

What is the power that Jesus is talking about in **Acts 1:1-8** and how can we experience this same power?

### **I. You'll Never Have This Power Until You First Have Confidence about Who Jesus Is and What He's Done for You**

In the books of Luke and Acts, Luke goes out of his way to emphasize the evidence or convincing proofs that Jesus is alive.

**Acts 1:3** "After His suffering, He showed Himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God."

**Luke 1:1-4** "Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught."

These proofs matter! In **I Cor. 15**, Paul says if Jesus did not rise from the dead, then Christians, of all people, should be pitied because our preaching is empty and our faith is futile because we're still stuck in our sins.

Without the resurrection of Jesus, Christianity collapses in on itself because the foundation of Christianity and the Gospel is the resurrection of Jesus.

You'll never be an instrument in the hands of a living God unless you believe that Jesus is alive today!

### **II. You'll Never Need This Power Until You're Convinced that Jesus is Still on the Move Through You**

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

The key word for understanding what's going on in the book of Acts is the word 'began' because Luke is saying the book of Acts is just a continuation of all that Jesus was doing when He was here on this earth and what He's doing in our world through His people.

Jesus said in **Matthew 16**, "I will build My Church..." and the book of Acts shows Him doing just that! Despite hostility and cultural objections, the Gospel and the Church of Jesus Christ are unstoppable because Jesus is continuing to do what He began to do when He was here on this earth.

Paul never lost sight of the fact that it was Jesus working through him on his three missionary journeys.

**Romans 15:17-18** “Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done”

Being a witness is never about making a name for ourselves. We get to get in on what Jesus is doing in our world today. There is no greater joy than having Him work in and through you.

### **III. You’ll Never Experience This Power Until You’re Gripped with a Love that Compels You to Risk Doing What He’s Called Us to Do**

#### **A. Jesus Declared that He Does Have a Plan for Rescuing Lost People**

**Acts 1:8** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

The verse begins with the word ‘but’ because Jesus was correcting His disciples for wanting to know when He was going to make all things right.

Jesus tells them in **v. 7** to stop trying to set dates trying to guess when it’s all going to happen. Instead of asking ‘When?’ we should be asking ‘What are we supposed to be doing and what did He give us to get it done?’

In **v. 8** we see that the power of the Holy Spirit and us being witnesses go together.

#### **B. To Be a Part of His Plan You Have to Open Your Mouth and Speak**

Thirty percent of the text in the book of Acts is taken up with Christians explaining the meaning of the Gospel to other people or being witnesses.

The word ‘witness’ is a key word all through the book of Acts that’s used 29 times either as a verb or a noun because it’s all about ordinary Christians telling other people who Jesus is and what He’s done for us.

#### **C. To Speak Most Effectively You Need to Be Filled with Love Instead of Driven by a Raw Sense of Duty**

A sense of duty and sound doctrine are not wrong, but those alone won't lead you to risk much of anything. But love for Christ has led thousands to risk everything – including their own lives.

**2 Corinthians 5:14-15** “For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.”

Love for Christ is what leads you to live radically different and to swim upstream when everyone else is going hard in the opposite direction.

How do you get that kind of love for Christ? In **Acts 1** and in **Luke 24**, Luke talks about a special empowerment so that you can make a difference in the world by living and speaking boldly for Jesus.

**Luke 24:49** “I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

When you're clothed or empowered with the Holy Spirit, there will be unspeakable joy, assurance, and a childlike freedom and loss of inhibition about what other people think about you because you're so overwhelmed and convinced of God's love for you.

It will change how you live and what you say. It's similar to what Paul talked about in **Ephesians 5:18-20**.