

Opening - Video

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.”

1 The former account I made, O Theophilus,

We really don't know all that much about Luke from the New Testament.

· We know that he was a physician (Colossians 4:14), a Gentile (from his name), a devoted companion of Paul (from Acts, and Colossians 4:14, Philemon 24, and 2 Timothy 4:11).

Theophilus - (Luke 1:3), Luke addresses Theophilus with title most excellent, which was a way to address people who held high office. - God Lover

of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in which He was taken up,

Luke's Gospel describes only the beginning of Jesus' work; Acts describes its continuation; and the work of Jesus continues to our present day. We are an extension of the book of acts

after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,

Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, instructed the apostles regarding what to do in His absence. He had given commandments to the apostles. One thing we don't like about commandments - not optional - on-line form

The Holy Spirit – the Third Member of the Holy Trinity – is the aspect of God that lives and empowers and inspires man.

If the glorified, resurrected Jesus needed and relied on the Holy Spirit, so should we. This is a pattern for the rest of the Book of Acts, which shows us how the **Holy Spirit does work through the church**.

3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Adam Clarke — Infallible proofs = “proofs of such nature, and connected by such circumstances, as to render them beyond doubt.”

In 1 Corinthians 15:6 Paul described one of these many infallible proofs: He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present. More than 500 people saw the resurrected Jesus, and most of them were still alive some 25 years later in the days of Paul's ministry.

The Holy Spirit Promised

4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Jesus knew that they really could do nothing effective for the Kingdom of God until the Spirit came. - STAY

QUOTE: A.W. Tozer — If you took everything done in the energy of the flesh out of Acts and left in only that done under the direction and power of the Holy Spirit, hardly anything would be missing. But if you did the same with modern Christianity you would have hardly anything left standing.

He commanded (Jesus) . . . the Promise of Father . . . baptized with the Holy Spirit: This is another example of how the fact of the Trinity – that there is One God in Three Persons – is woven into the fabric of the New Testament.

a “**Promise of the Father**” could only be good. Luke 11:9 “So 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. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 11 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? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 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!”

You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit: The idea of being baptized is to be immersed or covered over in something; even as John baptized people in water, so these disciples would be “immersed” in the Holy Spirit.

It may be more useful to describe the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a condition than as an experience. Staying wet after water baptism.

6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? They knew that the restoration of the kingdom to Israel was part of the New Covenant (as seen in Jeremiah 23:1-8, Ezekiel 36:16-30, Ezekiel 37:21-28).

7 And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

It is not for you to know: Jesus warned the disciples against inquiring into aspects of the timing of God’s kingdom, because those things belong to God the Father alone.

8 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.”

They would soon receive power with the coming of the Holy Spirit.

POWER - The Greek word for power is **dunamis**. We get our English words dynamic and dynamite from this word. the antonym for dunamis is adunatos. It means, unable, i.e. weak, impossible, impotent, not possible.

HERE’S THE POINT — Without the power of the Holy Spirit we are like the lame man of Acts 14:8. We are adunatos; impotent —we are unable to walk with Christ; we are unable to GO — unable to fulfill the Great Commission.

The natural result of receiving this promised power would be that they would become witnesses of Jesus, all over the earth.

CRUCIAL INSIGHT — The Greek word for WITNESS is MARTUS. Speaking of someone who testified to something in a court of law. So Jesus is making it very clear to them that the mission of the church is not only to be like Him — they are to testify of Him. The Truth

This was not a command to be a witness, **it is a statement of fact** - The words **shall be** are in the **indicative**, not the **imperative**. Jesus didn't recommend that they become witnesses; **He said they would be witnesses**.

Gospel Witness Shockwave

- Acts 1-7 describes the gospel in Jerusalem.
- Acts 8-12 speak of the gospel in Judea and Samaria.
- Acts 13-28 tells of the gospel going to the end of the earth.

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

The cloud that received Him is suggestive of the cloud of glory (called the Shekinah) that is associated with the Glory presence of God.

Remember Jesus' words to His disciples in John 16:7: 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 depart, I will send Him to you. Now the disciples could know that that promise would be fulfilled. The Holy Spirit was coming because Jesus promised to send the Spirit when He left.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

The two men (apparently angels) told the disciples to put their attention in the right place (obedience to Jesus' command to return to Jerusalem), - reminds me of the tomb - significance - He is not here - He is Risen!

Will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven: Jesus will return just as He left.

The Upper Room Prayer Meeting

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.

They returned to Jerusalem: This was notable obedience. Jesus told them to return to Jerusalem and wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4), and that is exactly what they did.

13 And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

These all continued with **one accord**: This is notable unity. When we saw the disciples in the Gospels, it seemed that they always fought and bickered. What had changed? Jesus in their hearts!

They all prayed, and they continued in prayer and supplication. The idea of supplication is a sense of **desperation and earnestness in prayer.**

----- **Lift Off** - Vertical Ascent - Major Power - controlled burn - harnessed - According to a flight plan - Truth & Power - 37 million hp

Main booster rocket - Acts was a massive awakening that completely and utterly remade one of the greatest civilizations in the history of the world. It is an indisputable fact that about 2,000 years ago there was a tiny group of nobodies who believed that Jesus Christ was the pre-existent Son of God, come to earth, became flesh, died and rose again from the dead, and ascended .

This small group of 120, had no political power, no educational power, no cultural power, no economic power, and yet within two centuries millions of people's lives were transformed Roman Empire . Millions of people experienced a joy and peace they'd never known.

Secondary Booster Rocket - The Great Awakening. - revival 1730s - In the first few decades of the Great Awakening, masses, approx 1/5 of the entire population of the British Isles, found themselves converted and swept up into the churches. - late 60's in the

Culture was radically impacted and over time there was a tremendous amount of social healing, and here's why. The rich became generous with their resources. The poor became more self-disciplined.

What is an awakening? What's a revival? In revival there is always two parts to it. If you have an architectural revival ... Remember the Greek revival architecture we talk about?

Someone revisits the original genius and the essence of some ancient thing. Then after revisiting, it's reapplied and brought. In other words, **a revival is something ancient received now.**

The average person living in the first century Roman Empire, or the 18th Century British Isles would define Christianity different than your typical person today. They observed word of god, empowered by the HS

The average person today misunderstands Christianity radically, because whenever the essence of Christianity has been understood on a widespread scale it has become a dynamic force.

So, what is that essential genius? It is in our text today

"I wrote to you all that Jesus began to do and teach." First, the essence of Christianity is about something Jesus has already done, he's completed, something that happened in Luke's first book. The reason that's so important is Christianity is about what Jesus has done, **not about what you have done.**

you say, "I believe that all good people, no matter who they are, can reach God whether you believe in Jesus or not. I think Jesus is good for many people and is a wonderful story, but all good people can come to God."

Luke says, "Christianity is not about being good. It is not at first about anything you do at all. It's all about what he's done." And, what has he done?

First of all, it says, "He suffered." - the average person says, "Well, all good people, if you try your best and you ask forgiveness when things go wrong ... God will receive all good people no matter who."

Here's the question that comes up. Could you do that in a court of law? If a judge found a man guilty, let's say, and the man said, "I'm guilty, but I'm going to try to do better and I'm very sorry for what I've done." Here's what the judge says, "Great, but You're not free. You mean well. You've said you're sorry. You've asked for forgiveness. You're going to do a better job. That's right, but you know what? I can't just let you go free. There is something leftover that has to be paid for. There is a barrier."

There is punishment. It's has to be paid for. "... the wages of sin is death ..." In this little word, "He suffered," we're told what Jesus has done.

Jesus stood before death and destruction. It has a right for us. It has a right to take us. But Jesus stands between us and it, and he says, "I won't let you have them." So the wrath of death and destruction comes down on him, and as a result, he pays. The barrier is gone because He suffered.

If you're saved by Jesus' teaching, by being a good person, then you've saved yourself. It's what you have done, but the essence of Christianity is what he's done.'

Secondly, we're told he showed that he was alive. Isn't it interesting how it says he proved to them he was alive. "After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive."

When Jesus showed up. The disciples weren't like, "We knew it." They say, "This can't be. This is hallucination. This is a hoax.

Nobody in the Jewish religion then believed that an individual could be resurrected. Jesus comes and he shows himself to have been the one who suffered and the one who rises from the dead.

As a result, **he has accomplished your salvation for you.** It's what he began to do, but notice the word **began**. The other part of the essence of Christianity is this. It's what Jesus **began to do and teach**. The founder of every other major religion has already done all the things he'll ever do. He has already taught all the things he'll ever teach. But Jesus has just begun. **Jesus is not finished.**

Part of the essence of that original genius of Christianity was that Jesus has not just died and risen, **he's ascended**. He's been taken up. He's sitting at the right hand of the Father. Now what does that mean? Jesus goes up to continue. He's only begun.

In John 16, he says, "I have to go up so I can send the Holy Spirit to you." He says in the book of Matthew, "You will do greater deeds than I." Do you know what this is talking about? **The ascension does not mean that Jesus is no longer here. The ascension means Jesus is here all over.** The ascension does not mean that Jesus Christ is no longer present.

The ascension of Christ means that now he is present in us. He is present through us. His power radiates from the throne out into the whole world through us. The essence of Christianity is that he suffered in our place unto death, conquered death, and now he works from heaven through us.

Now When you open the Bible to read it, when you sit down to pray, when you come to worship, when you open your mouth to talk to somebody else about Jesus Christ, when you open your heart to feed and help somebody in Jesus' name what do you expect? We have low expectations of Jesus. If Jesus is ascended, You

should expect revolution. You should expect transformation. You should expect to change the world. He works his power out from heaven through you.

If you understand that, gang, give up your small ambitions. Repent of your low expectations. Stop looking at your problems like they're things that will always be ... Stop looking at your bad habits like things you could never get over. How dare you. Stop looking at the problems of our peninsula as mountains that could never be moved. How dare we.

Real Christianity is always an intersection of truth and power, never one without the other. It's not real Christianity if you just have a general belief. Paul says, "There are people who have a form of godliness but they deny the power thereof."

Paul says, in Romans 1:17, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation ...". The Bible says the truth that we've been talking about of Jesus' suffering and death and resurrection and ascension, the truth about Jesus Christ does not bring power, it does not result in power, it does not lead to power. **It is the power.**

If you don't have power in your life you don't have the truth. You haven't grasped it. You don't get it. Revelation please!!!!

Paul doesn't say, "Well, you have the truth. Now pray for power." If you read the prayers of the Bible, you'll see **they're always praying the truth in it until it explodes.**

Booster Rocket - In 1859, there was a major revival in Northern Ireland. There was a whole slew of prostitutes. Most of the prostitutes in the cities of Northern Ireland were converted. A man, a reporter, sat down with one of the prostitutes and said, "Why are all of you girls coming to church?" She said, "Well, sir, there are two problems. First of all, business completely fell off during the revival." Then she said, "Secondly, for the first time in our lives, people on the street are treating us with kindness and respect."

You know what was going on there? There are a lot of people today who say what this country needs is a return to traditional values. Look, the irreligious people were giving those girls business, so they were exploiting them. But the religious people were treating them with contempt, and they were exploiting them too.