

ACTS 1:1-11

Marching Orders from
the Resurrected Lord



AWAIT EQUIPPING IN JERUSALEM (1:1-5)

¹ *In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.*

- Luke's first book is the Gospel of Luke, written to Theophilus
- Acts continues Luke's writings
 - "taken up" – the ascension is where the Gospel of Luke ends and Acts begins
 - "commands" refers to the directives for gospel mission Jesus gave His apostles
 - What the apostles hear and what they impart is not to be taken lightly

³ *He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.*

- Jesus validates His resurrection life by various incremental bodily presentations over a period of forty days
- The Apostle Paul refers to some of these appearances
 - I Corinthians 15:3–7
- The appearances of Jesus are convincing and radically transforming
- Luke is completely convinced by the testimony of the many eyewitnesses

AWAIT EQUIPPING IN JERUSALEM (1:1-5)

- “*speaking about the kingdom of God*” – the advance of the gospel is the advance of the sovereign authority and reign of Jesus Christ
 - Acts 2:32–36
 - The ministry of Jesus does not end in defeat, but in glorious resurrected and ascended glory as our exalted King
 - Believing in King Jesus means advancing His kingdom
- ⁴ *And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”*
- The disciples are to wait in Jerusalem for the supernatural equipping of the Holy Spirit
 - Luke 24:49
 - The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the experience of all followers of Jesus
 - Supernatural life and emboldening enablement are aspects of being “*clothed with power from on high*” that all followers of Jesus experience
 - Ezekiel 36:25–27
 - The Holy Spirit is God’s promise of life and power to engage in the gospel mission we are all called to advance

AVOID DISTRACTIONS – SUPERNATURAL EMPOWERMENT FOR THE MISSION WILL BE PROVIDED (1:6-8)

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

- The Apostles are still anticipating Israel’s return to national prominence

⁷ He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.

- First century Jewish Christians were concerned about the promises to national Israel
- Today people are distracted by end-time events and predicting when the Lord will return
- We are to resist distractions
- The return of the Lord is to be a purification doctrine, not a deliverance doctrine
 - I John 3:2–3
- How are we going to avoid distractions?

AVOID DISTRACTIONS – SUPERNATURAL EMPOWERMENT FOR THE MISSION WILL BE PROVIDED (1:6-8)

⁸ *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

- We avoid distraction and move forward intentionally and powerfully with the gospel by the presence and provision of the Holy Spirit
- The immediate context indicates the power of the Holy Spirit is realized by the boldness to witness
 - Bold witnessing is indicative of those brought to spiritual life
 - Advancing of the gospel of the kingdom is spiritual warfare
 - Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world
 - 1 John 4:2–4
 - This is not what CAN be true; it is what IS true
- The power of the Holy Spirit is not an occasional explosion
- The power of the Holy Spirit is the consistent characterization of people transformed by gospel grace
- *in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth*” – as Jay said, this is the predicted ripple-effect of the Holy Spirit’s power in God’s people
 - Isaiah 44:6–8
- The Holy Spirit inspires and empowers our faith

ANTICIPATE EMBARKING ON THE MISSION (1:9-11)

⁹ *And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.*

- Jesus commissions His followers and then He ascends into the glories of heaven
 - Jesus lifts from the earth and a cloud, likely of shekinah glory, envelops Him, removing Him from their sight
 - Matthew 17:1–6
- Jesus told them to go and wait, but they stand and stare (we humans are easily distracted)

¹⁰ *And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”*

- Captivated in amazement, two men in white robes appear (angels) to refresh their memory
- Faith takes the Lord at His word and anticipates the fulfillment of His promise by the obedience of faith
- Belief in the promise of the Holy Spirit to give life and empower our witness will anticipate that power through the obedience of faith
 - The Lord promises the victory and provides His Spirit to lead His people in victory
 - 2 Corinthians 2:14–17
 - Desperate times call for the people of God to be dependent on the Spirit of God

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How are you seeing the evidence of the equipping power of the Holy Spirit?
- What are the distractions you are facing and how would God have you avoid them?
- In what ways are you anticipating the power of the Holy Spirit in and through you?

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