

The Activity of the Risen Christ

Acts 1:1-3

Acts 1:1–3 (NKJV)

- ¹ The former account 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 He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,
- 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.

I. Jesus' **Movement**: the People of God

1. Authorship and Context:

- Written by Luke, a physician and companion of Paul, as a sequel to the Gospel of Luke.
- Acts describes approximately 30 years of the early church's growth, from the 30s AD to the early 60s AD.
- The book highlights the unstoppable movement of God's people despite persecution and opposition.

2. Jesus' Final Instructions:

- After His resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days teaching about the kingdom of God.
- He instructed His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit, who would empower them for their mission (Luke 24:49).
- The Holy Spirit is mentioned over 50 times, underscoring His role in directing and empowering the church.

II. Jesus' **Mission**: the Kingdom of God

1. What Is the Kingdom of God?:

- The kingdom is God's rule, both in the present and in the future.
- It is spiritual, not political or geographical, and advances wherever Christ is acknowledged as Lord.

2. Present Reality:

- The kingdom grows as lives are transformed through the gospel (Luke 4:18-19, Matthew 6:33).
- Jesus' death and resurrection defeated Satan's power, establishing the foundation of His kingdom (Colossians 2:15).

3. Future Fulfillment:

- One day, Christ will fully establish His kingdom, conquering all enemies, including death (1 Corinthians 15:24-26).

Extra Notes:

4. **Our Role in the Kingdom:**

- We are called to proclaim the gospel, heal the brokenhearted, and lead others into God's kingdom (Luke 4:18-19).
- The mission of God's people is to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8).
- The word "witness" appears 39 times in Acts, emphasizing the central calling of every believer.

III. **Jesus' Mandate: the Spirit of God**

1. **The Holy Spirit's Role:**

- Empowers believers to live boldly for Christ (Acts 1:8).
- Directs the church's mission, chooses leaders, and enables miracles (Acts 8:29, 13:2, 15:28).

2. **Jesus' Promise:**

- The Holy Spirit is essential for fulfilling our mission. Without Him, the work is impossible (Zechariah 4:6).
- The Spirit equips God's people to overcome challenges and remain faithful in witness.

3. **Practical Implications:**

- Dependence on the Holy Spirit is vital for life and ministry.
- Being "God's people on the move" means listening to the Spirit's guidance and acting in obedience (Galatians 5:16, 5:25).

IV. **Jesus' Message: the Gospel of God**

- **The Gospel on the Move:** Acts shows the unstoppable spread of the gospel, fulfilled in these stages:
 - 1:1-6:7 – Gospel in Jerusalem.
 - 6:8-9:31 – Gospel in Judea and Samaria.
 - 9:32-12:24 – Gospel to the Gentiles (Antioch and Cornelius).
 - 12:25-16:5 – Gospel in Asia Minor.
 - 16:6-19:20 – Gospel in Europe.
 - 19:21-28:31 – Gospel in Rome.

Applications for Today

1. Trust that God's plan is unstoppable. The Gospel will advance despite opposition, persecution, or human limitations. The Gospel finds a way.
2. Seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit each day as a necessity for Christian living and serving in the power of God. The early church relied entirely on the Holy Spirit for power, guidance and advancing the kingdom.
3. Look for opportunities to share the gospel "as you are going" (Matthew 28:19-20). Acts shows that ordinary people can do extraordinary things for God, empowered by His Spirit.

Extra Notes:

"Do not forget the culture of the inner man, I mean of the heart. How diligently the cavalry officer keeps his saber clean and sharp; every stain he rubs off with the greatest care. Remember, you are God's Sword, His instrument, I trust a chosen vessel unto Him to bear His name. In great measure, according to the purity and perfections of the instruments, will be the success. It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus. A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God." - Robert Murray McCheyne