

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

They are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye mistakes can be found. So he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at [pastorpat@waukeshabible.org](mailto:pastorpat@waukeshabible.org).

**Date:** Jan. 11, 2009

**Title:** The Hero’s Legacy - The Mission of God- Part 2

**Text:** Acts 1:1-11

**Theme:** The story teaches us about a very specific message, means, and method as to how we are to carry on the Hero’s legacy.

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

## The Storyline of the Bible

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### **THE BIG PICTURE**

- The Subject of the Story - The Person and Purpose of God
- The Villain Appears
- The Hero Foretold
- The Hero Arrives
- The Hero's Work
- The Hero's Legacy
- The Story's Epilogue

### **Its Eternal Value:**

God is winning. The Book of Acts gives us the ongoing victory of God. What the Hero has entrusted to us, He has performed through us.

### **The Storyline:**

The Book of Acts gives the reader the continuation of the story from Luke 24:39-49. The power they were told to wait for is now present. The Book of Acts gives us the narrative of how the story of God was proclaimed to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem.

### **The Problem:**

"As the Book of Acts illustrates, the church has never had an easy job of accepting 'all nations' into the fellowship without distinction -- and that continues to be a struggle for Christians today. In Luke-Acts, the mission to 'all nations' was part of God's plan from the beginning and the book of Acts recounts the human struggles to fulfill this plan of God." <http://www.crossmarks.com/brian/luke24x36.htm>

Part of our ongoing problem is that we fracture the story. We do not see the continuity of God's story. We are too prone toward viewing things narrowly and not seeing how God is in all of it.

### **Questions:**

1. What does Acts 1:1 establish for the reader?
2. Notice the word "orders" in 1:2. What does this word imply?
3. What was the content of what Jesus taught during the 40 day period between His resurrection and His ascension?
4. Notice the continuity between Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:4.
5. How is the promise in 1:4 defined in 1:5?

6. What was our Lord's response to the questioning of His disciples in verse 6?
7. What does the statement, "Which the Father has fixed by His own authority" suggest?
8. What will we receive in verse 8? Where will this take us?
9. Do you think the ideas of 1:8 are necessary or suggestive? Is this pattern for going more than suggestive?
10. If it is more than suggestive, then how can we as a local church pattern our ministry around this idea?
11. What was the content or subject matter preached by the early church (cf. Acts 5:42)?
12. Are you living with power or is it something other than what you possess?
13. How would you receive this power if you did not have it?
14. Do you believe God's method is working? How do you see yourself in light of the Book of Acts? Are we a part of this one story or are we different?

The Holy Spirit is calling to us from this passage to consider three ideas.

**To Know:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to know how His people are a part of the Hero's legacy and conquest.

**To Choose:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to choose to live in light of the one story of God.

**To Feel:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to feel the joy of knowing that God is winning and His kingdom is advancing.

### **Introduction:**

There is a distinct person, purpose, and plan in the legacy our Lord and Hero left to those who love Him and who are privileged to carry out His mission in His physical absence.

We go to all the nations, but we begin in Jerusalem. I often hear of imbalance where the focus is only on missions as it exists on foreign soil or an unhealthy emphasis in reaching your immediate context without any real concern for the world at large.

Our responsibility to the world is not met by throwing a few dollars and offering up token interest. Such a response cannot silence our obligation to our immediate community either. We must become relational with our community and with our world through individual involvement and through corporate strength.

Inside the Book of Acts there are three salient features. First, what were they to do; second, how would they do it; finally, where were they to go?

### **Outline:**

- I. The Message - ([“Christ crucified”] 5:42; 8:5, 12, 35; 9:20)

The following passages all look at the word “Christ.” I am not considering the words “Word” or “Gospel” as it is found in the Book of Acts.

“But the things which God **announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled**” (Acts 3:18).

“And every day, in the temple and from house to house, **they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ**” (Acts 5:42).

“Philip went down to the city of Samaria and **began proclaiming Christ to them**. 12 But when they believed Philip **preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ**, they were being baptized, men and women alike” (Acts 8:5).

“But Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by **proving that this Jesus is the Christ**” (Acts 9:22).

“The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, **preaching peace through Jesus Christ** (He is Lord of all)” (Acts 10:36).

“**men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**” (Acts 15:26).

“**explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead**, and saying, ‘**This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ**’” (Acts 17:3).

“But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, **Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ**” (Acts 18:5).

“for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, **demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ**” (Acts 18:28).

<sup>21</sup> “‘For this reason some Jews seized me in the temple and tried to put me to death. <sup>22</sup> So, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating **nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place**; <sup>23</sup> **that the Christ was to suffer**, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.’ <sup>24</sup> While Paul was saying this in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice, ‘Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad.’ <sup>25</sup> But Paul said, ‘I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but **I utter words of sober truth**’” (Acts 26:21-25).

“**preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ** with all openness, unhindered” (Acts 28:31).

The early Church preached Christ. We have nothing to be ashamed of for which we should apologize. We are a Christ-Exalting, Word-Centered community of faith. All of this is consistent with what the early church taught, preached, and lived. It is always and forever about Jesus Christ. The Scripture is full of information, but it is information that leads the reader to Christ. Unfortunately, we read Scripture to find out how to live, but its purpose is to show us what He is like. The Scripture is all about Jesus. I believe the Scripture teaches on many things but all these things lead us to the one thing. This leads us to the second salient feature as to how they would do it.

## II. The Means – “All authority has been given”

There is a legitimate progression from God the Father to His Son through the Holy Spirit to His people. God the Father has given to His Son the authority to carry out the mission. The

Son has transferred this authority to His disciples. In the Holy Spirit, His disciples have a resident power to carry out the Hero's Legacy. Notice the breakdown of this thought.

A. The Father gives to His Son the authority to carry out the mission.

Jesus uses two different words for sending in verse 21. "Jesus has often spoken of the Father's sending him using both **apostellô** and **pempô**. Here he employs both words in practically the same sense." (A.T. Robertson's *Word Pictures* on John 20:21).

<sup>21</sup> "So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you; **as the Father has sent Me**, I also send you.' <sup>22</sup> And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (John 20:21, 22).

<sup>18</sup> "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, '**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.**' <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit'" (Matt. 28:18, 19).

The New Testament record clearly shows how Jesus Christ came from and worked by means of the Father. He was sent or commissioned with a work to do. He worked because the Father worked through Him. He represented the Father's authority. It is this same sending or commission the Son has given to us. We do not have to wait and see as if we do not know what we are to be doing.

B. The Son has transferred this authority to His disciples.

<sup>21</sup> "So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you; **as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.**' <sup>22</sup> And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (John 20:21, 22).

<sup>18</sup> "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, '**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.**' <sup>19</sup> **Go therefore** and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit'" (Matt. 28:18, 19).

"Jesus came close to them and made this astounding claim. He spoke as one already in heaven with **a world-wide outlook and with the resources of heaven at his command.** His authority or power in his earthly life had been great (Mt 7:29; 11:27; 21:23ff.). **Now it is boundless** and includes earth and heaven. It is the sublimities of all spectacles **to see the Risen Christ without money or army or state charging this band of five hundred men and women with world conquest and bringing them to believe it possible and to undertake it with serious passion and power.** Pentecost is still to come, but dynamic faith rules on this mountain in Galilee." ([emphasis added] A.T. Robertson's *Word Pictures* on Matthew 28:18).

It is unfortunate and foolish for us not to be about our Father's business. For us not to know what we are to be doing is nonsense and a denial of the Hero's work and legacy. This business is the mission of God and the mission of His church.

- C. In the Holy Spirit, His disciples have a resident power to carry out the Hero's Legacy, His mission (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4).

What is this power? The Gospel's clearly set forth the idea that Jesus sent His disciples out to do the work entrusted to Him. They numerically increased the efforts of our Lord. When Jesus sent them out, they were empowered to do what He did. They could preach the gospel, they could heal the sick, they could walk on water, and they could feed the five thousand simply because He was living His life through them. They carried with them the authority of God's commissioning.

If I read the story correctly, something more would be added. We are set up for this in the upper room discourse (John 14-16), the final words of our Lord prior to His ascension to the Father's right hand (Luke 24:49), and then the initial chapters in the Book of Acts (Acts 1-2).

Whatever the power was in Luke 24, it had not yet arrived, and whatever happens in Acts 1 and 2 is the fulfillment of this promised power. It is the same word used in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:8. Neither the words "power" nor "promise" are used in John 13-16. Yet Jesus does promise the Holy Spirit and an expansive work.

Notice how the God-life is described in John 14:10-12.

<sup>10</sup> "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but **the Father abiding in Me does His works.** <sup>11</sup> Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. <sup>12</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father**" (John 14:10-12).

I believe this power is the reduplication of His life living through us. It is what happens when an individual under the New Covenant becomes a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. This power is not conditioned on our willing, but on His working. Acts 1:5 refers to this promise and power as a **baptism with the Holy Spirit**. I believe this is what is referred to in Romans 6:1ff; 1 Corinthians 12:13; and Galatians 3:27.

<sup>1</sup> "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup> May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? <sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that all of us who have been **baptized into Christ Jesus** have been baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, <sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; <sup>7</sup> for he who has died is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:1-7).

“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13).

“For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Gal. 3:27).

This does not mean we should not choose to gladly see Him work and acknowledge it as such. But if you are a believer and listening today and you are asking yourself what you must do to get the power, I will tell you based on the authority of God’s word that you already have it. The “it” is the “Him,” and the “Him” is the mystical presence of and union with God in His people. Your denial of Him in thinking something else has to happen is what keeps you from enjoying all that God is doing. God has placed at your disposal His power, and your failure to acknowledge the power does not make Him withdraw it. It’s always there whether or not we use it. We are doing the greater work simply because He is working in us and through us to those around us. It is not a work that is qualitatively different, but a work that is quantitatively different. We are doing quantitatively more than what was done by our Lord and His initial pre-Pentecost disciples. When Jesus Christ localized Himself in Israel, His immediate and direct impact was confined to that geographical location. Now after 2,000+ years His presence has been multiplied by the millions and is global. In the upper room discourse the Gospel of John tells us how this is possible (14:13-17). The Holy Spirit “abides with you and will be in you.”

<sup>13</sup> “Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. <sup>16</sup> I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; <sup>17</sup> that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you” (John 14:13-17).

It is almost as if prior to the incarnation God the Father worked in and through His people. In the incarnation Jesus worked in and through His people, and now the Holy Spirit works in and through His people. All three persons were always present and active, but each individual had a period of notable prominence. Inside the Trinity there is neither division of essence nor confusion of persons. Inside the Trinity, there is an equality of essence but a distinction of activity. Notice how this unity and diversity are expressed in John 14:20, 26 and 28.

<sup>20</sup> “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. . . <sup>26</sup> But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. . . <sup>28</sup> You heard that I said to you, ‘I go away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I” (John 14:20, 26, 28).

I believe we have denied the power by believing that what they had with Jesus or in the Book of Acts is different than what we have. I believe we deny the power for at least three reasons.

**First**, we believe our lives are too ordinary and do not see how who we are or what we do as a part of the one story.

**Second**, we do not see ourselves as a part of a local church and how this local church is a part of the larger, global body of Christ. We do not see how we fit into the larger story of God.

**Third**, our view of eschatology greatly affects how we understand this idea. I believe it is wrong for us to deny the one story of God. I believe it is wrong to think everything is worse now than during any other period of time. We have a very defeatist view of history. I believe wickedness will exist until Jesus comes. But His coming is not based on our commitment or corruption but on His calendar. The Father has set a time for the Son to come. This time has been “fixed by His own authority” (Acts 1:7).

Friend, you and I are living in a kingdom reality. It is different than what it will be, but it is no less real. When we see ourselves as a part of this one story, then we will see that God is working and His purpose is unfolding according to His timing. We are a part of this divine lineage and legacy. It is ours to possess and to proclaim. Let us notice the third salient feature as to where they were to go.

### III. The Method – “Beginning in Jerusalem to the End of the Earth”

The spread of the Hero’s Legacy has been constant and continues to this day. Its termination point in time has been set by the Father. It is not true that God is waiting for us to win the last person to Christ as if we are delaying His coming. That last person who is won to Christ prior to His coming is already set by the Father. However, until that time we are to be busy telling the story to everyone, everywhere, at all times.

The Book of Acts shows us the expansive nature of the early church. This is the greater work done by His disciples after the promised power came upon them. I want us to note how Acts lays out this thought. Please notice with me the following outline.

- I. Ministry of Peter (Ch. 1-12)
  - A. Ministry in Jerusalem (Ch. 1-8:3)
  - B. Ministry in Judea, Galilee and Samaria (Ch. 8:4-11:18)
  - C. Ministry in Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch (Ch. 9:32-12:25)
- II. Ministry of Paul (Ch. 13-28)
  - A. Ministry in Phrygia and Galatia (Ch. 13:1-15:35)
    1. First Missionary Journey (Ch. 13-14)
    2. Jerusalem Counsel (Ch. 15:1-35)
  - B. Ministry in Macedonia (Ch. 15:36-21:14)
    1. Second Missionary Journey (Ch. 15:36-18:22)
    2. Third Missionary Journey (Ch. 18:23-21:14)
  - C. Ministry in Caesarea and Rome (Ch. 21:15-28:29)
    1. Jerusalem Imprisonment (Ch. 21:17-23:35)
    2. Caesarea Imprisonment (Ch. 24-26)
    3. Trip to Rome (Ch. 27:1-28:15)
    4. Rome Imprisonment (Ch. 28:16-31)

The Book of Acts wants us, 2,000 years later to be encouraged and empowered to continue what has already begun. The gospel has been preached globally and His kingdom has spread global, but it is not over. Our Captain, our King, our Hero has never rescinded the order, "Go into the entire world and make disciples of all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem!"

Yet we are not to live in defeat or in any way be discouraged. We must know and believe that God has won the victory and we are carrying out His continued conquest.

**SHEPHERDING THE PEOPLE:** (What is the NEXT STEP?)

1. You and I are a part of something that is much bigger than ourselves.
2. We are a part of the winning team.
3. Friend, where are you in all of this? "What think ye of Christ?" Is He the focal point of your life? As we consider the old year behind us and the new year in front, where is Christ in all of this? He must be everything or He will be nothing.
4. Friend, the elders are asking you to pray for us as we seek to understand how we can think, plan, and act more aggressively in the implementation of this great truth.
5. We must not relent, we cannot quit, and we must stay the course no matter how difficult the waters might be or how great the obstacles appear. God has won, and we are winning.
6. What would God have you do? Your options are two-fold. Stay faithful to the task before you and be a part of a community of faith or be sent by a community of faith for the telling of the story elsewhere. May God give us wisdom in this holy endeavor.