

Who Am I?

Unlocking and Understanding the Mystery of Christ

Week Eight

Day Two

THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTS OUT

“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.” (Acts 1:8)



Understanding the Word

It is a great mystery how the work Jesus Christ began here on earth so long ago and in such a short period of time, continues still today and will continue until He comes back. Luke was a writer of one of the Gospels, but his writing did not stop at the end of that Gospel. Luke wrote to a man named Theophilus (who appears to be a Gentile and a high ranking official in the capital of Syria that had become a Christian), about the life of Jesus Christ. Then he followed it up with a very descriptive historical account of the workings of the Holy Spirit. Often this book of the New Testament is labeled the *ACTS OF THE APOSTLES*, but it more accurately is called the *ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*.

In the Old Testament, the Spirit manifested throughout history in a particular person for a particular task. What we find in the New Testament is that the Spirit manifests Himself throughout history into the modern day in all the people that have been set apart for God; people that have given their life to God known as Christians. These CHRISTIANS, also known as the FAMILY OF GOD, are also known as the CHURCH, or the BODY of Christ.

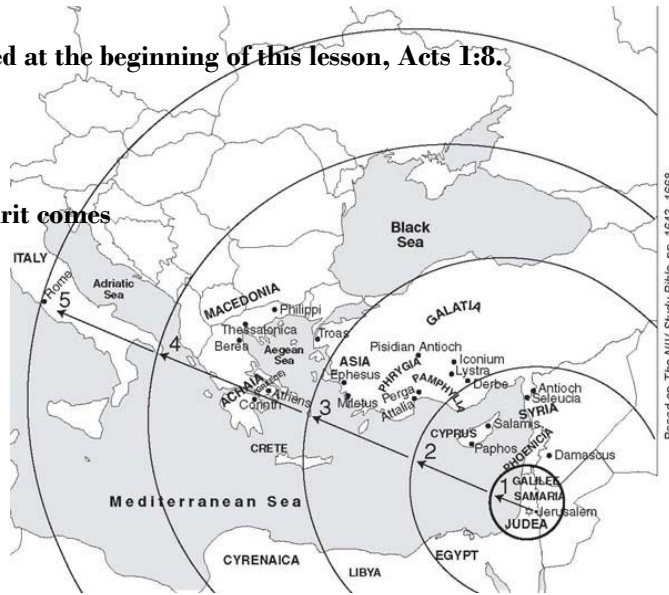
After Jesus walked this earth as God in flesh, He went back into heaven and then gave the power from on high, the Holy Spirit. This power was given to the disciples for witnessing and making disciples. After Peter received the power, we see a complete change in him. This man that was outspoken but weak in the flesh became bold and courageous and spoke the Gospel truth with power. The message cut to the hearts of people that listened, and 3,000 people were added to the “CHURCH” that day. So it begins...or should I say so it continues... the message of Jesus Christ bringing salvation to the world.

In today’s lesson, we are going to explore the outline of the historic book of ACTS to learn how the church grew. When you understand the expansion of the church, you will more easily understand how the letters that comprise the majority of the remaining New Testament books fit together which we will study in tomorrow’s lesson.

The book of Acts can be outlined with the key verse I used at the beginning of this lesson, Acts 1:8.



1. You will receive Power when the Holy Spirit comes
2. You will be My Witnesses in Jerusalem
3. In Judea and Samaria, and
4. To the ends of the earth.



Based on The NIV Study Bible, pp. 1643, 1668.

RECEIVING POWER from the HOLY SPIRIT

DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 1-2

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE: Acts 1: 4-5, 8, 15-16

V. 4-5 On one occasion, while He was eating with them, He gave them this command: “Do not leave _____, but wait for the gift My Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized with _____, but in a few days you will be baptized with the _____.

V. 8 But you will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My _____...

Jesus is then taken up to heaven before their very eyes. A twelfth disciple was chosen, and then Peter addresses the believers among them.

V. 15-16 In those days, Peter stood among the believers; how many does it record? _____

DIGGING DEEPER: Act 2

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:1-4, 11, 37-47

V. 1-4 What day did the Holy Spirit come? _____

What did they hear and see? _____

All of them were _____ with the _____ and began to _____ in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

There were lots of God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem due to the Day of Pentecost festival.

V. 11 What did each person hear the believers declaring? _____

Peter then stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "...These men are not drunk... this is a fulfillment of what was spoken by the prophet Joel..."

V. 37-41 When the people heard this, they were _____ and said to Peter and the other apostles, Brothers, what shall we do?"

How did Peter respond? _____

V. 39 The promise is for _____ and your _____ and for all who are _____ - for all whom the Lord our God will call.

This power is for all that believe in Him, not just a select few!

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about _____ were added to their number that day.

V. 42-47 Using the description from this passage, describe the earliest church.

And the _____ added to their number _____ those who were being _____.

This portion of Scripture is so important in understanding what our churches of today should look like. In my opinion, I think the majority of our local churches are missing the mark of what God intended church to look like. Notice, Jesus went away and sent the power of the Holy Spirit to fill the believers up to tell others about Him and His message, not to bring attention to them. Then, after being filled and telling the message (witnessing), God added to the numbers daily. We gain power to witness. God still does the saving!

Now, we are going to travel quickly through the following years and see how the church expanded through the power of the Holy Spirit.

TO BY MY WITNESSES IN JERUSALEM

DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 3

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE: Acts 3:16

Peter and John spoke to a crippled man and he was healed. People came running to see what had taken place.

V. 16 To whom did Peter give credit? By faith in the name of _____, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is _____ and the faith that comes through Him that has given this complete _____ to him, as you can all see.

DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 4

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE: Acts 4:1-4, 7-8, 31

V. 1-3 Peter and John were detained by the _____ and were put into jail until the next day.

V. 4 But many who heard the message _____, and the number of men grew to about _____.

V. 7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: By what _____ or what _____ did you do this?

V. 8 Then Peter, _____ replied...

Peter and John were in and out of jail for speaking the message of Christ. The church prayed...

V. 31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was _____. And they were all _____ and spoke the Word of God boldly.

The apostles continued to preach and teach. Miracles continued to take place and the Jewish leadership continued to be offended and get angry. To them, instead of seeing the truth and fulfillment of prophecy, they saw heretical teaching. They saw glory given to the man Jesus, discounting that it was actually glory given to God.

Eventually the hatred gets out of control and Stephen was put on trial.

DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 5-7

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE: Acts 6:5, 9-10

V. 5 They chose Stephen, a man full of _____ and of the _____.

V.9-10 Men began to argue with Stephen, but they could not stand up against the _____ or the _____ by whom he spoke.

They seized him and brought him before the Sanhedrin. They produced false witnesses to speak against him, but what they saw was that his face was like the face of an angel.

Stephen speaks truth boldly and with power. It convicted the hearts of those that listened. Some may have turned to the faith, but others rallied against him in anger, dragged him out of the city and stoned him to death. A young man named Saul was there, giving approval of his death.

This is the important transition. Persecution was taken to new levels. Saul was on the warpath to do away with this heretical teaching. The Apostles begin to scatter from beyond the boundaries of Jerusalem. It was very soon after that reports of Gentiles receiving the message and the power of the Holy Spirit began being circulated.

Who Am I? Unlocking and Understanding the Mystery of Christ
Week Eight: New Testament Survey *Day Two: The Holy Spirit Acts Out*

**TO BY MY WITNESSES
IN ALL JUDEA AND SAMARIA**

DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 8

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE: Acts 8:5, 17, 29

V. 5 Who went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ? _____

V. 17 After Peter and John joined him, they placed their hands on them, and they received what? _____

V. 29 Who told Philip to go to a chariot and whom did he minister to? _____



DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 9

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE: Acts 9:5, 11, 15

V. 5 Who met Saul as he neared Damascus? _____

V. 11 Jesus struck him blind and sent him to a man named what? _____

V. 15 The Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is My _____ to carry My name before the _____ and their kings and before the people of Israel.

DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 10

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE: Acts 10:1, 23b, 34, 36, 44-46

V. 1 At Caesarea there was a man named _____, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment.

V. 23b Who came to him from Joppa? _____?

V. 34 Peter realizes that God _____.

V. 36 What was the message used to witness? _____

V. 44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the _____ came on all who heard the message.

V. 45 Who are the circumcised believers? _____

What were they astonished about? _____

V. 46 What did they hear? _____

The message of Jesus Christ was first taught to the Jewish people. Christianity was believed to be a sect of Judaism. After the vision God gave Peter and after the witness of God giving the Holy Spirit to all people, Jew or Gentile, Peter knew it was for all. He went back to tell the others, and soon they understood and Paul's ministry was about to begin.

DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 11-12

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE: Acts 11:19-26

V. 19-26 In what town were Christ's followers first called Christians? _____

TO BY MY WITNESSES TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 13-28

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From this point on, we get to follow the ministry of Paul. One can follow the remainder of the book as it coincides with the letters to follow. Below is a map to show the routes Paul followed, but the big picture is that he took the Gospel message into hard territories. The message was rejected by many, but it was received by a few that caused churches to be established and an expansion of the Gospel like none experienced since.



Many people battle and debate the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures clearly show the people received the Holy Spirit baptism as a regular step of receiving the message after salvation. The Holy Spirit works through us to give us power to witness to bring more people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. It is not to bring attention to ourselves. It is not for show, and it was never intended to bring division in churches. It's sole purpose is to spread the Gospel and lead others into salvation.



Let me challenge you to draw near to Christ through His Word and through prayer. Ask God for the power from on High. If you are already a Christian, you have the Holy Spirit residing in you. If you desire more power for living with integrity and witnessing, it is the delight of God to give it to you. As you are praising Him and living for Him, as you worship Him and love Him, ask Him for the evidence of the baptism and open your mouth in faith.

This lesson is not to teach on the baptism, but to let you know that God's Word, message, and power are for all who believe.

We have travelled through the Gospels and now through the book of Acts. Next, we will travel through the greatest letters ever written as they are truly love letters from God.