



WEEK 1: The Church—it's not up to us!

- **Jesus demonstrated dependence on the Holy Spirit** (in *The Gospel of Luke*)
 - The priority of prayer (Luke 3:21-22)
 - God provided the plan (Luke 4:1b, 18; cf. Isaiah 61:1-2)
 - God provided the power (Luke 1:35; 4:1ff, 4:14ff; 12:10; etc.)
 - God confirmed the message/messenger (Acts 2:22, etc.)

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was *led around by the Spirit* in the wilderness.... And Jesus returned to Galilee *in the power of the Spirit...*” (Luke 4:1, 14a NASB; emphasis mine)

- **Jesus' disciples must also depend on the Holy Spirit** (in *The Acts of the Apostles*)
 - The priority of prayer (Acts 1:14; cf. Luke 11:11-13)
 - God provided the plan (message, Luke 24:44-47; Acts 1:1, 3; messengers, Luke 24:48; Acts 1:2, 8b)
 - God will provide the power (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8a; see also 2:1ff)
 - God will confirm the message/messengers (Acts 2:1ff; 2:43; etc.)

“*but you will receive power* when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and *you shall be My witnesses...*” (Acts 1:8a NASB; emphasis mine)

- **Waiting for the Promised Power** (1:6-26)
 - Christ's Ascension (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9)
 - Returned to Jerusalem (24:52; also Acts 1:12)
 - The Upper Room (Acts 1:13)
 - Prayer (1:14; cf. Luke 11:2) and Preparation (Acts 1:15-26; cf. Luke 22:28-30; 24:45)

“And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to *stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.*” (Luke 24:49 NASB; emphasis mine)

- **The Power Comes** (2:1-13)
 - The Purpose: God confirms His message [the Gospel] and His messengers [the Apostles] to a primarily Jewish audience in Jerusalem

- The Passage: “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. *And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.*” (2:1-4; emphasis mine)

- **The Plan Commences**: The empowered messengers deliver the message (2:14-36)
 - The Message: The Prophecy of Joel (vv. 14-21). The Person and Work of Christ (vv. 22-36).
 - The Messenger: The Transformed Apostle (cf. Luke 5:5; 22:33-34, 60-62; etc.)

“Simon answered and said, ‘Master, *we worked hard all night* and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets.’ When they had done this, *they enclosed a great quantity of fish...*” (Luke 5:5-6)

“Lord, *with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!*” (22:33)

“But Peter said, ‘Man, I do not know what you are talking about.’ Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord.... And he went out and wept bitterly.” (22:60-62)

- **The Promised Results** (2:37-47)
 - Conviction about sin (v. 37)
 - Call to repentance and faith in Jesus for forgiveness of sins (vv. 38-40)
 - People are saved (v. 41)
 - The Church is born (vv. 42-47)

“So then, those who had received his word were baptized; *and that day there were added about three thousand souls.* They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” (Acts 2:41-42 NASB; emphasis mine)

- **Application**
 - You are God’s chosen messenger!
 - You must **pursue God’s plan**, not yours.
 - You must **rely on God’s power**, not yours.
 - Without God, *nothing* is possible (John 15:5; Luke 22:21-34; Acts 5:36-38)
 - With God, *everything* is possible (Luke 1:37; Acts 5:39)

So what will happen when you pursue God’s plan in His power? Your life will be awesome (Acts 2:12, 43). People will be saved (Acts 2:37, 41, 47). The Church will grow. God will be glorified.



WEEK 1: The Church—it's not up to us!

...but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. – Acts 1:8 NASB

Three and a half years of intense training. Countless theological discourses, parables, object lessons and probing questions. Blind, deaf, mute, lame and leprous people healed. The dead raised. Water turned to wine. Storms calmed. Thousands fed. Demons exorcised. Religious leaders silenced. A mount of transfiguration. A hill of crucifixion and darkness. Traitors and cowards. An empty tomb. A risen Lord. A great commission. A lasting promise. But Jesus said, “Wait. You’re still not ready. Go back to Jerusalem and wait. You can’t possibly accomplish the task I’ve set before you.” The Apostle John tells us that “apart from [Christ] you can do nothing” (John 15:5). But, as the angel Gabriel reminded Mary the virgin, “nothing will be impossible with God” (Luke 1:37). There’s a freedom found in recognizing your own deficiencies and inabilities, and embracing the reality of God’s omnipotence. The fact that the Holy Spirit resides within us and empowers us should never cease to amaze and humble even the most self-confident believer. His power working in and through us should inspire in us an unshakable hope for the present and the future.

- WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES SAY?
Acts 1:1—2:47
 - Previously (Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:1-12)
 - Prayer and Preparation (1:13-26)
 - Power Received (2:1-13)
 - Preaching Truth (2:14-36)
 - Penitence and Promise (2:37-41)
 - Praising God (2:42-47)

- WHAT DID YOU HEAR BEN SAY?

- WHAT DO YOU HEAR GOD SAYING?

As you listen to the lecture and spend time in discussion with the men around your table, try and listen to what God may be trying to say to you. Write down those verses or thoughts that encourage or possibly convict you, so that you can remember them.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- WHAT DO YOU NEED TO PRAY FOR?

If you heard God speaking to you today, it's vitally important that you take action. Maybe you need to confess. You might need God to clarify what He said or give you further direction. It could be that you simply need to express thanks to Him. During your prayer time around the table, be sure and provide one another with the opportunity to share a prayer request and to pray for them together.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- WHAT TO READ FOR NEXT WEEK?

- Acts 3:1—6:7