

The Map Before the Movement

#1 of "Acts: The Road Before Us"

Acts 1:1–12 | May 10, 2026 | Dave Geldart | Tru Community Church

1. [1] OPENING

- a. Have you ever been truly lost in a place you weren't supposed to be lost?
- b. Back in 2017 I got to go on a 14ers hiking trip with some friends.
 - i. The first day, we tackled Mt Yale near Buena Vista, Colorado.
 - ii. Parked at the Denny Creek Trailhead and began the unrelentingly steep climb up through the trees.
 - iii. We got to just over 13,000 feet before an iced-over boulder field stopped us cold.
 - iv. A bit too dicey – others hikers were turning around
- c. So we turned back.
 - i. Figured we'd just follow the trail back down.
 - ii. Except after a little while, the trail was gone.
- d. Late-season snow had deeply buried everything — markers, footprints, any visible path.
- e. And before long we weren't just off-trail. We were lost.
 - i. No cell service.
 - ii. I was completely spent — altitude and asthma had teamed up to absolutely wreck me.
 - iii. And there was this slow, rising feeling that we were in real trouble.
 1. Not full panic yet. But getting there.
- f. After about an hour of wandering around and trying to find something familiar, we took a rest in a little clearing.
 - i. Made our best guess at a heading and were about to set off.
 - ii. Then one of the guys remembered something.
 - iii. He had started a tracking app called MAP MY RUN before we left the trailhead.
 - iv. No data signal to load a map — but GPS still worked.
- g. We stood there watching his screen.
 - i. And slowly — very slowly — and then all at once — a line appeared.
 - ii. A line back to the trailhead where he'd pressed START on his app
 - iii. A direction.
- h. Here's what got me:
 - i. It didn't fix the altitude or the exhaustion or the snow.
 - ii. But it told us the one thing we needed most:
 1. *Which way to go.*
- i. And that direction was nearly the exact opposite of where we had just decided to head.

- i. We were not at all where we thought. Not just a little lost.
- ii. We were on the wrong side of the mountain entirely.
- j. That map didn't just help us. I believe it saved us.

2. TRANSITION: DIRECTION, NOT PASSION

- a. I want you to hold that image for a minute.
- b. Because here's what I've noticed about people who follow Jesus —
 - i. most of us are not stuck because we lack passion.
 - ii. We're not stuck because we don't care.
 - iii. We want to follow Jesus.
 - iv. We want our lives to matter.
 - v. We want Tru Community Church to be something more than a nice gathering on Sunday mornings.
- c. But if I stopped most of us and asked — *what exactly are we supposed to be doing?* — I think a lot of us would reach for something vague.
- d. That's not what Jesus left us with.
 - i. He left us with a map.

3. SERIES INTRODUCTION

- a. [2] Today we begin a new series on the book of Acts, called “The Road Before Us.”
- b. We're going to spend the next several months here looking at the roadmap of the early church
 - i. and I believe it's going to change the way you see your life, your neighborhood, and this church.
- c. [3] Today we're going to be looking at “The Map Before The Movement” in the first 12 verses of Acts chapter 1.
- d. Now let's go to the text.

4. SCRIPTURE READING — Acts 1:1–12 (NIV)

[4] "In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, [5] which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you

will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' So when they met together, they asked him, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them: 'It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 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.'

[6] After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 'Men of Galilee,' they said, 'why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.' Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city."

5. Pray

6. THE ACTS OF JESUS CONTINUED (vv. 1–3)

- a. Luke opens this book with a very intentional move:
- b. He says, "*In my former book, Theophilus...*"
 - i. First off: Who's Luke?
 1. Not one of the 12 apostles
 2. A traveling companion of Paul (who will show up later in Acts)
 - ii. And second: Who's Theophilus?
 1. We're not certain!
 2. Most likely a wealthy Greek patron who commissioned Luke to write these accounts.
 3. So that the story of Jesus could be told accurately, not only for himself, but kept for generations.
- c. But here's what's really interesting.
 - i. Luke says his first volume — what we call the Gospel of Luke — was about all that Jesus *began* to do and to teach.
 - ii. *Began*.
 - iii. That single word is doing enormous work.
 - iv. If volume one is about what Jesus *began* — then volume two, the book of Acts, is about
 1. [7] what Jesus *continues to do*.
- d. This is not the story of the early church figuring things out on their own after Jesus left.
 - i. This is the ongoing story of Jesus himself acting and working in our world —

1. still teaching, still pursuing, still sending —
 2. now through his Spirit, in his people.
- e. A more accurate title for this book would be *The Acts of Jesus CONTINUED (through the Holy Spirit)*
- i. because the only character who runs from the first page to the last is Jesus.
 - ii. The apostles come and go.
 - iii. Peter eventually fades into the background.
 - iv. And Paul takes center stage.
- f. But the unifying thread through all twenty-eight chapters of Acts is Jesus,
- i. still at work – through his Spirit who is now with us.
- g. That changes how we read this book. And it changes how we see ourselves in it.
- i. Because the same Jesus who gave the roadmap in Acts 1:8 is still giving direction today!
 1. Still empowering. Still moving through ordinary people.
 2. People like the ones in this room.

7. [8] FORMATION BEFORE FUNCTION (vv. 3–7)

- a. Look at verse 3. After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples over a period of *forty days*, teaching them about the Kingdom of God.
- b. Forty days.
 - i. This wasn't rushed.
 - ii. This was intentional formation.
- c. And then — after forty days of personal resurrection appearances and conversations —
 - i. the disciples ask Jesus their question in verse 6:
 - ii. *"Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"*
- d. If you're like me, you're tempted to read that as a dumb question.
- e. But Here's what's actually going on:
 - i. The Old Testament prophets — especially Isaiah — promised that God would restore his covenant people and then send them out as a light to all nations.
 - ii. The disciples are essentially asking,
 1. *When does that launch?*
 2. *When does the new-covenant Israel get formed so the blessing can go out to the world?*
 3. *Surely, its now, right?*
 - iii. That's not confusion. That's the right question. They just want the timeline.
- f. And Jesus says: the timeline is actually not yours to know.

g. But here's what *is* yours: Wait

- i. Don't go yet.
 - ii. Don't sprint ahead of what the Spirit hasn't yet given you.
 - iii. Formation before function.
 - iv. Power before mission.
 - v. You cannot be effective witnesses without first being filled witnesses.
 - vi. Wait for God to make the first move.
- h. Here's a phrase I keep coming back to in this text, a phrase that has frustrated me to no end, but has played out to be profoundly true in my life:
- i. *If you're into God, you're into waiting.***
- i. That's not a comfortable word.
 - i. We are wired for action — as a culture, as a church.
 - ii. We want to go, we want to grow, we want results.
 - iii. And Jesus says to his followers: wait.
 - j. But what looked like delay was actually preparation.
 - k. The waiting was not wasted time. It was part of the roadmap.
 - i. There's a word in that for some of you today.
 - ii. If your faith life has felt like a waiting room lately —
 - 1. like things aren't moving the way you expected —
 - iii. But that may not be a sign that God has forgotten you.
 - 1. It may be a sign that He's forming you.
 - 2. And He forms before He sends.
 - iv. *We'll dig much deeper into that upper room waiting season next week when Dilan preaches on the second half of Acts 1.*

8. THE MAP IS GIVEN (v. 8)

- a. Now we get to the verse that will anchor not just this sermon, but this entire series.
- b. [9] Verse 8:
 - i. If you haven't memorized this one, that's your to-do this week:
 - ii. *"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."*
- c. Take a look around the room for a second.
 - i. *(gesture to the maps)*
- d. Those aren't decorations. They're the point.
- e. Because what Jesus gives his disciples in verse 8 is not mere motivational language.

- i. It's not an inspirational slogan.
 - ii. It is a *roadmap*.
 - iii. For his mission through his people.
 - iv. It's structured. It's sequential. It's strategic.
 - 1. Jerusalem. Judea and Samaria. Ends of the earth.
- f. And here's the thing — if you keep reading Acts, that's exactly how the gospel moves:
 - i. Chapters 1–7: Jerusalem. – WHERE THEY WERE
 - ii. Chapters 8–12: Judea and Samaria. – FARTHER OUT INTO THEIR REGION
 - iii. Chapters 13–28: Out to the nations. – SO THAT THE WHOLE WORLD CAN KNOW
- g. Luke effectively designed his entire second volume around this single verse.
 - i. **Acts 1:8 is not only Jesus' roadmap for the whole book of Acts,**
 - 1. But, as it turns out, also for the 2000 years of church history ever since.**
 - ii. That is not a coincidence. That is genius.
- h. And scholars have noted something even deeper here —
 - i. every phrase in verse 8 is drawn from the book of Isaiah.
 - 1. the Spirit coming (Is 32), being his witnesses (43), the ends of the earth (49).
 - 2. Jesus isn't inventing new language. This has been the plan all along.
 - ii. Jesus isn't inventing new language.
 - 1. He's hyperlinking everything back to prophecies long foretold
 - 2. This has been God's plan all along.
 - iii. He's telling his disciples:
 - 1. *Everything the prophets said God would do through his restored people — that starts now. Here. With you.*
- i. So let's make this concrete.
 - i. (*gesture again toward the maps*)
 - ii. Acts 1:8 is not just a verse about first-century Israel.
 - 1. It is still the operating map for the church still today.
 - 2. Including this church. Including us.
 - 3. Same principles, same vision, same mission.
 - iii. Here's how it overlays onto our world:
 - iv. **Jerusalem** — WHERE WE LIVE
 - 1. That's St. George. It's Manhattan. It's Wamego.
 - 2. The Hwy 24 corridor.
 - 3. The people who live within a few miles of where you're sitting right now.
 - 4. Your neighbors. Your coworkers.

5. The family down the street you've never formally met.
 6. The guy at the coffee shop or the gas station you see every week but have never asked how he's actually doing.
- v. **Judea -- OUR REGION**
1. Greater Pottawatomie County. Riley County.
 2. Including towns like Westmoreland, St. Marys, Junction City, Ogden.
 3. The communities in our region that need a healthy, rooted, gospel-preaching church — and don't have one close.
- vi. **and Samaria – A LITTLE FARTHER OUT. Outside Our Comfort Zone**
1. Like the rest of our state
 2. EVEN Lawrence
- vii. **Ends of the earth** — Everyone else.
1. The whole world!
- viii. This is not abstract. This is our map.
- ix. And notice what Jesus does *not* say.
1. He doesn't say, "*Go everywhere all at once.*"
 2. He gives his followers a direction.
 - a. Start where you are.
 - b. Then move outward.
- x. This is how ripples work.
1. Our word this year is RIPPLE.
 2. And Acts 1:8 is the ripple picture mapped out in explicit detail
 - a. small acts of faithfulness in your Jerusalem
 - b. creating expanding circles of impact.
- xi. The gospel doesn't explode outward randomly.
1. It moves relationally.
 - a. And Geographically.
 2. Person to person.
 - a. And Place to place.
- xii. That's why our vision as a church is what it is this year. OUR BHAGGs:
1. Growing from 10 people in discipling relationships to 30.
 2. Growing from 2 healthy small groups to 6.
 3. Joining a church planting network and helping launch a new congregation somewhere in our region.
 - a. Those aren't programs.
 - b. They are pathways along the map.

- c. They are how the ripple actually moves outward from this room.
- j. Now — one more thing before we leave verse 8, and it's the most important thing.
 - i. Jesus says, *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you — and then you will be my witnesses."*
 - ii. Power first. Then witness.
 - iii. Holy SPIRIT moves. Then we respond.
- k. Witnessing is not showing what we can do for God.
 - i. It is showing and telling what God has done for us.
- l. We are not the source of this mission. We are the conduit.
 - i. The moment we start trying to advance this map on our own power —
 - 1. our own wisdom, charisma, our own strategy, our own hustle —
 - 2. we've already reversed the order.
 - ii. Gospel Movement without the Spirit leads to burnout.
 - 1. Many of us have seen what that looks like in the church.
 - 2. Some of us have experienced it personally!
- m. The Holy Spirit is not a bonus feature.
 - i. He is the mission's power source. Full stop.
 - ii. Starting back then. And every day since right up until this moment.

9. [10] THE KING IS ENTHRONED (vv. 9–11)

- a. Then something strange happens in verse 9. Jesus leaves.
 - i. He ascends into the sky.
 - ii. A cloud receives him, and he disappears from their sight.
- b. Can you imagine what it would have been like standing there?
 - i. Like the disciples, I'd imagine your first instinct is to feel like something has gone wrong.
 - 1. He just got back (from the dead!) — and now he's LEAVING again?
 - 2. Wouldn't it be better if he just stayed? If he led everything directly?
- c. But think about it: If Jesus remained physically present, he could only be in one place at a time. He's now and forever embodied — just as we are.
 - i. One conversation. One city. One room.
 - ii. But through His Holy Spirit — he can be everywhere.
 - 1. In every believer.
 - 2. In every culture.
 - 3. In every language.
 - 4. Across every time zone simultaneously.

- iii. So in fact, this is not Jesus abandoning the mission.
 - 1. This is Jesus expanding the mission to every corner of the earth.
- d. And that cloud he ascends into?
 - i. Luke is doing something very deliberate.
 - ii. He is pointing us back to Daniel chapter 7 — a vision of "one like a son of man" coming in the clouds to the Ancient of Days, being given dominion, glory, and a kingdom that will never end.
 - iii. That image in Daniel is not about leaving.
 - 1. It's about enthronement. It's a coronation.
 - iv. So, contrary to what it may seem to the disciples, Jesus ascending into the clouds is not a disappearance. It's a king taking his throne.
 - 1. Lots more going on here!
 - 2. *We're going to dig into Daniel chapter 7 much more deeply during our Daniel series this fall — so put a pin in that.*
 - v. But Luke wants you to see it here because it is here.
 - 1. He is reigning. Right now. Over everything.
 - 2. STILL PART OF THE PLAN
- e. And verse 11 anchors us with something critical:
 - i. *"This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go."*
 - ii. Not metaphorically
 - 1. Bodily. Visibly. Actually.
 - iii. Because history is not random.
 - 1. It is not circular.
 - 2. It is going *somewhere*.
 - iv. There is a destination on this map.
 - 1. The return of Jesus and the ultimate restoration of all things.
 - 2. The great ending — and new beginning — that everything in Scripture is pointed toward.
 - v. Which means everything we do in the meantime matters.
 - 1. Every opportunity to witness to Jesus taken
 - 2. Every disciple made.
 - 3. Every LIFE Group formed.
 - 4. Every new church planted.
 - 5. Every neighbor loved.
 - 6. It all counts.

- 7. It's all a part of the journey.
- vi. We are not wandering. We are moving toward something certain.

10.[11] STOP STARING & START MOVING (vv. 11–12)

- a. And then — one of the most relatable moments in all of Scripture:
- b. The disciples are standing there. Staring up. Necks craned toward the sky. Their brains had shut down.
 - i. The little spinny circle on the screen was stuck
 - ii. Hard to blame them.
- c. And two angels show up and essentially say:
 - i. *"What are you doing? Why are you just standing there?"*
 - 1. Don't worry.
 - 2. He's coming back — you have their word on that.
 - 3. But right now — you have somewhere to go.
 - a. A mission that just launched.
- d. **Stop staring and Start moving.**
 - i. That's a word for a lot of us.
 - ii. Because there are some very sanctified-looking ways to stand still, staring up at the sky.
 - 1. We attend.
 - 2. We watch and listen.
 - 3. We wait for perfect conditions.
 - 4. and never let the answers land on our feet and change our behavior.
 - iii. The angels aren't being harsh. They're being pastoral.
 - 1. Because the entire point of what just happened —
 - a. the ascension, the promised Spirit, the roadmap of the mission—
 - b. is that it's already in motion.
 - 2. The direction has been given. The power is coming.
 - a. You don't need more information before you take a step.
 - b. You need to actually take the step you can already see.
 - 3. And the first step is to obey what Jesus has said:
 - a. wait for the Holy Spirit, and then go!

11.[12] APPLICATION — WHERE ARE YOU ON THE MAP?

- a. So this morning, let me ask you the question this passage is asking:
- b. *Where are you on the map?*

- i. Not in theory.
 - ii. Not in a vague, general, "I want to make a difference someday" way.
 - iii. Specifically. Right now. In your actual life.
- c. Who is your Jerusalem?**
- i. Who are the people immediately around you —
 - 1. in your neighborhood, your family, your workplace, your school
 - a. who don't know Jesus?
 - 2. Not "people in general."
 - 3. Specific faces. Specific names.
 - a. Can you think of one? Two?
 - ii. The mission of The Kingdom of God doesn't start in the abstract.
 - 1. It starts with the person next door.
 - 2. The coworker who just went through a divorce.
 - 3. The family down the street with the new baby and no church home.
 - 4. The friend who's quietly done with God but still, quietly, wonders if there's something there.
 - iii. Your Jerusalem is closer than you think.
- d. What is your next step?**
- i. Not a five-year strategic plan.
 - 1. Or an overhaul of your entire life.
 - ii. One step. This week.
 - iii. What would your obedience look like over the next seven days?
 - 1. Maybe it's inviting someone to join you here next Sunday.
 - a. Or come with you to LIFE Group.
 - 2. Maybe you need to text a friend this afternoon and ask how they're actually doing.
 - 3. Or show up to a LIFE group for the first time.
 - 4. Or Have the conversation you've been putting off.
 - 5. Join a discipling relationship.
 - a. Ask someone you know to go through this Acts Study guide with you through this summer.
 - b. Let us know if you'd like help being matched up!
 - 6. Take one step outward.
 - iv. You don't need the whole map.
 - 1. You just need a direction.
 - 2. And to take a next step on the journey

e. **And for those of you exploring faith:**

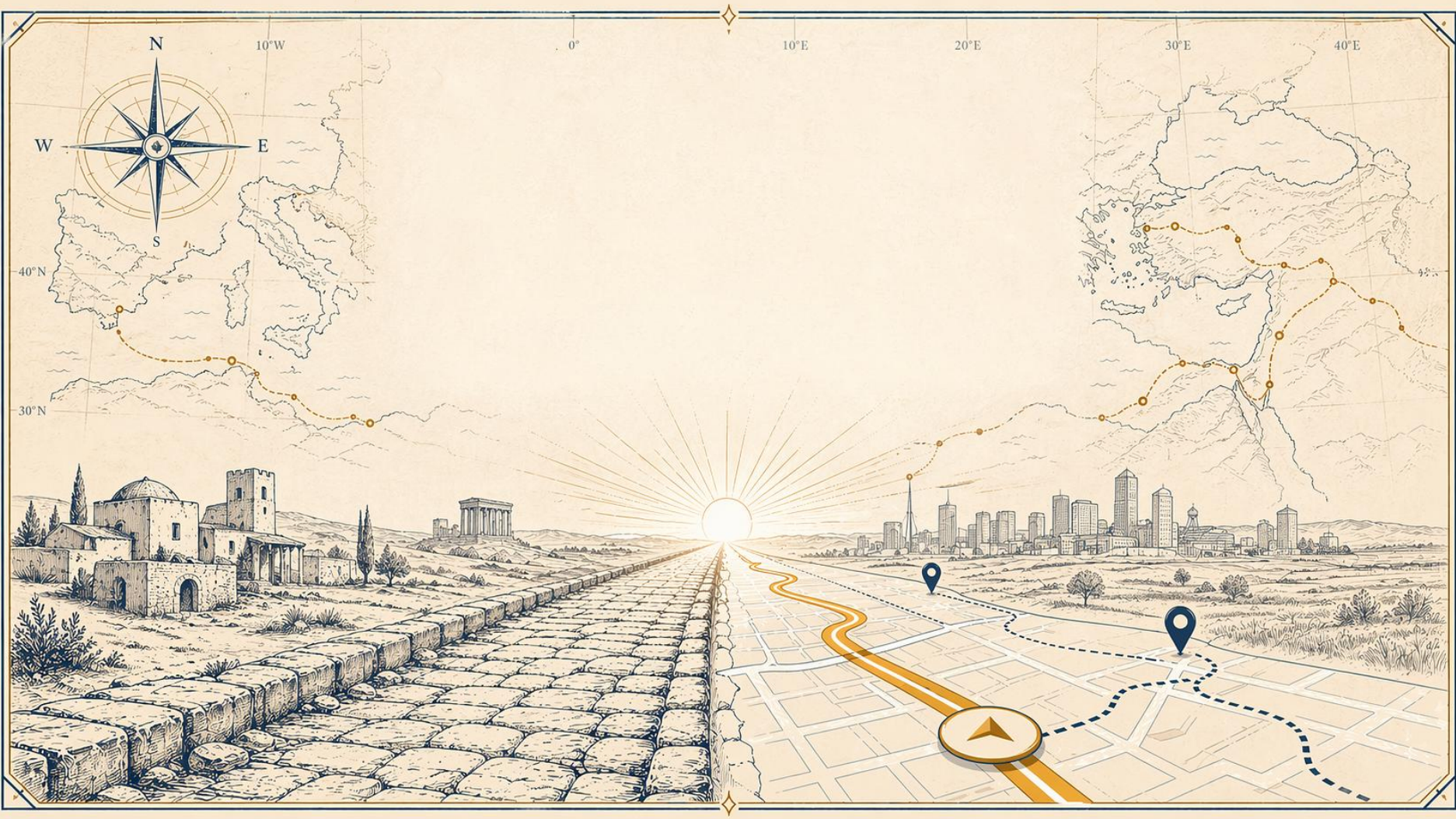
- i. Maybe you walked in this morning not sure what you believe.
- ii. Maybe someone dragged you here and you figured you'd give it a shot.
 - 1. Welcome! Genuinely.
- iii. This series is going to walk through one of the most remarkable stories in human history —
 - 1. And you are part of that story whether you know it yet or not.

12.[13] CLOSING

- a. Let me bring you back to that Colorado mountain.
- b. We were standing in the deep snow.
 - i. Exhausted. Lost.
 - ii. On the wrong side of the mountain.
- c. And then a line appeared on a phone —
 - i. slow at first, then all at once —
 - ii. pointing us to the trailhead.
- d. It wasn't complicated.
 - i. It didn't answer every question.
 - ii. The map was mostly blank
 - iii. It just gave us a direction.
 - iv. And that direction saved us.
- e. Now picture the disciples.
 - i. Standing on the Mount of Olives.
 - ii. No buildings.
 - iii. No budget.
 - iv. No strategy.
 - v. No army.
 - vi. No seminary degrees.
- f. Just a handful of ordinary people —
 - i. fishermen, a tax collector, a revolutionary —
 - ii. standing on a mountain with the memory of a promise
 - 1. and a map drawn with a few overlapping circles:
 - 2. *Jerusalem. Judea, and Samaria. Ends of the earth.*
- g. From that moment, the gospel moved.
 - i. Jerusalem to Judea.
 - ii. Judea to Samaria.

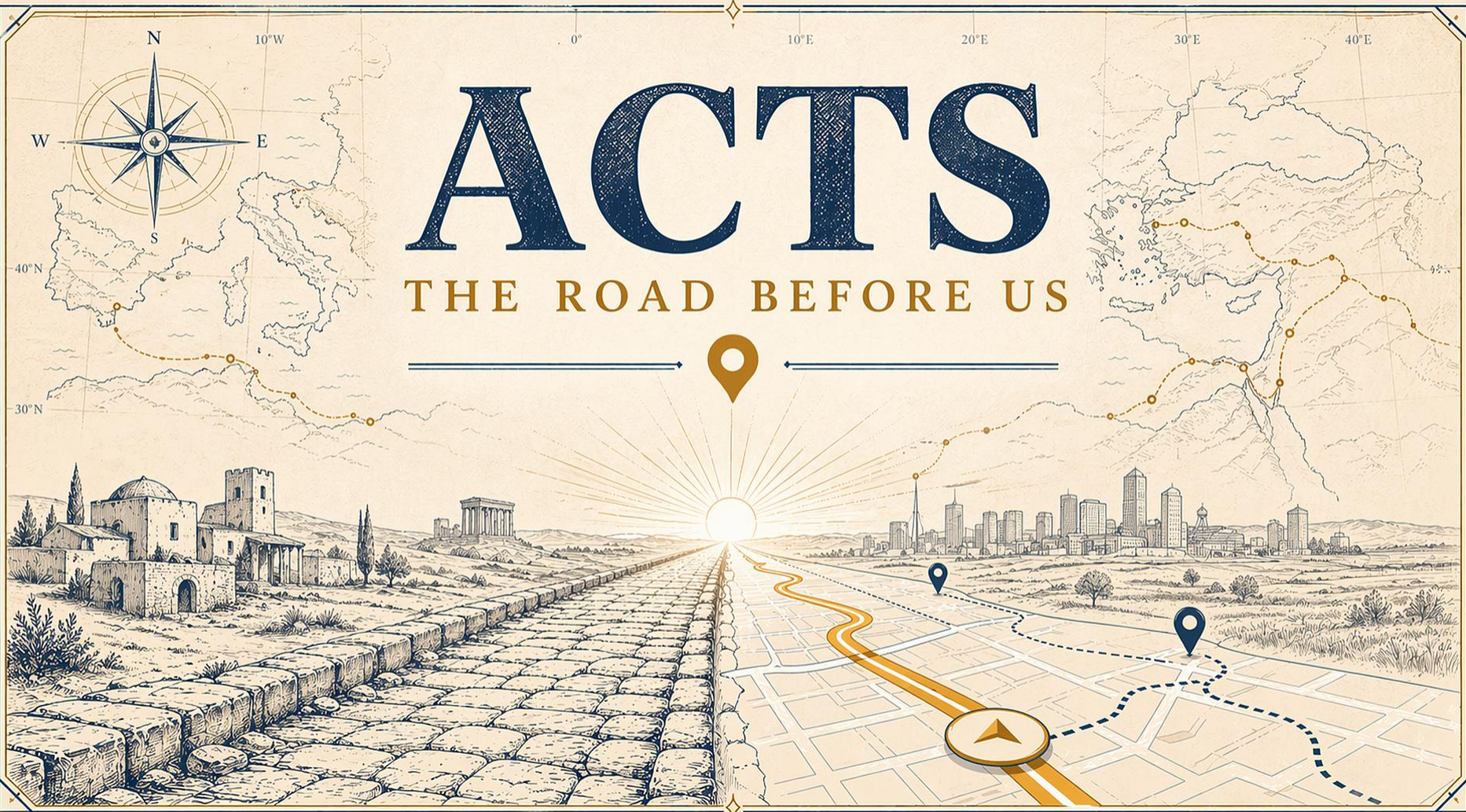
- iii. Then outward!
- iv. Across centuries.
 - 1. Lives of men and women spent on this journey.
 - 2. Through persecutions and revivals and dark seasons and moments of extraordinary courage by ordinary people.
- v. Across oceans and continents.
- vi. Until it reached Kansas.
 - 1. Until it reached the Hwy 24 corridor.
 - a. Manhattan, Wamego, Saint George
 - 2. Until it reached this room.
- vii. The line came slowly and then all at once -- all the way here.
 - 1. And now — the question isn't whether there is a direction.
 - a. A mission.
 - b. There is. Jesus settled that.
- viii. The question is whether *we* will step onto the road.
 - 1. And follow it where the line leads
 - 2. Because the map has already been given.
 - 3. The power is already promised.
 - 4. The King is already reigning.
- ix. Now the movement begins.
 - 1. Will you join us?

13. Let's pray.



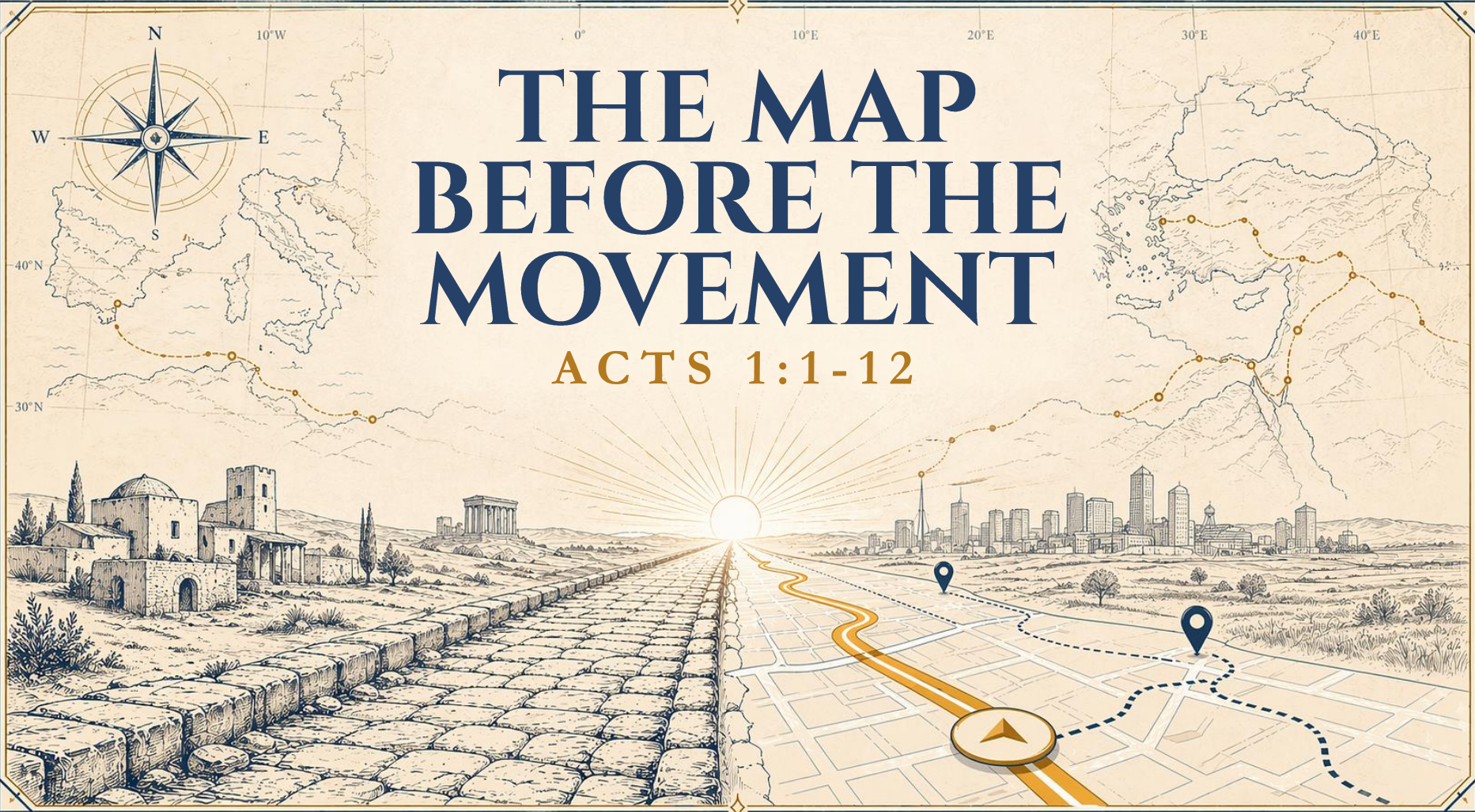
ACTS

THE ROAD BEFORE US



THE MAP BEFORE THE MOVEMENT

ACTS 1:1-12



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ACTS 1:1-12

¹ In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about **all that Jesus began to do and to teach** ² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³ After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but **wait for the gift** my Father promised, 

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ACTS 1:1-12

which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” ⁶ Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ **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.”**



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ACTS 1:1-12

⁹ After he said this, **he was taken up** before their very eyes, and **a cloud hid him** from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? **This same Jesus**, who has been taken from you into heaven, **will come back in the same way** you have seen him go into heaven.” ¹² Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city.



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THE ACTS OF JESUS CONTINUED

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FORMATION BEFORE FUNCTION

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THE MAP IS GIVEN

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when the Holy Spirit comes on you;
and you will be my witnesses
in **Jerusalem**,
and in all **Judea**
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THE KING IS ENTHRONED

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STOP STARING & START MOVING

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WHERE ARE YOU ON THE MAP?

Who is your Jerusalem?

What is your next step?



THE MAP BEFORE THE MOVEMENT

ACTS 1:1-12

