

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Part 2 – His Presence Brings His Power

Acts 1.4-14

Focus

- How big is the Kingdom you seek? (v.6-7)
 - At this time / Restore / Israel – all point to localized, political
 - Q: do we want the same for America?
 - Jesus' Kingdom is not of this world – that's the Kingdom we seek
 - Spiritual myopia (good ol' days) – no rebuke but a refocus
 - God is way too big for this kind of longing – Isaiah 49.5-6
 - Don't look back, look forward – pulling back (perspective) gives clarity and context
 - He promises something way better – the Spirit! (v.8) who give us strength/power
- What does the Spirit compel us to do? (v.8)
 - We become His witnesses – something is lit inside of us that compels our faithfulness to the end – *dunamis / marturo*
 - We witness wherever we go and we go everywhere – Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria (where no one wants to go), Ends of the earth – His scope is worldwide TURKEY
 - Want to fight myopia (spiritual, cultural, racial)? Give yourself to some mission effort
 - “Mission is not a one-way promotion but a two-way encounter in which we learn more of what the Gospel means” ~ Lesslie Newbigin
 - “Foreign missions are not an extra; they are the acid test of whether or not the church believes the Gospel” ~ Lesslie Newbigin
- How incredible is the Lord we follow?
 - Resurrected – He has defeated sin and death, we follow a living Lord
 - Ascended – He is the exalted One, seated at God's right hand, readying a place and praying for us regularly, we follow a glorious Lord
 - Returning – He is finishing His work and He will return when He will set everything right, we follow a victorious Lord

Response

- Obedience (v.4-5, 12)
 - Two parts: going and waiting
 - One is typically harder than another
 - His promise sustains us in the waiting
 - His presence accompanies us in the going
 - The “where” can be a struggle – Jerusalem
- Gathering (v.13-14)

- Your individual obedience can be stoked by the relational connection
- Prayer (v.14)
 - Their waiting looked like dependence expressed in prayer (what does ours look like)?

Questions for Discussion

1. Jesus said to seek (or “venture out on”) the Kingdom of God. Read Matthew 6.33 and Luke 12.31. What do you think are practical ways that we seek His Kingdom? According to the context of both passages, what is the opposite of seeking His Kingdom? Why is it important for us to see the Kingdom as larger than any locale or era (contrary to the disciples in Acts 1.6-7)? How should that shape how we engage the culture around us?
2. Reread Acts 1.8. Why does the Spirit compel us outward? Why does Jesus articulate those particular four realms of witness and ministry? How do you participate in those right now? How do you want to participate in the future? What step do you need to take to get ready for that?
3. Reread the two Newbigin quotes in the sermon notes. To what degree do you think he’s right? How does that impact you personally? How should it impact us, as a church?
4. The Apostles often bundled together the resurrection, ascension, and return of Jesus. Why do you think they did so? What is one specific way that reminding ourselves of these truths can bolster your faith?
5. In the sermon, we argued that the response of the Apostles was three-fold. Regarding obedience, which is harder for you personally: the going (to do something that is difficult) or the waiting? Why? What is an example of that in your life?
6. Regarding gathering, read Hebrews 10.24-25. What is an example of how your individual obedience has been stoked by the relational connection in the church?
7. Regarding prayer, what are three things you’re depending on God for right now? How are you praying for those things?