

Acts 1:6-11

“In like manor”

- I. Intro
- II. Vs. 6-8 When, What and How
- III. Vs.9-11 In like manor

I. Intro

There have been several times in my life, that God’s direction in my life is uncertain to me. These crisis of faith can tend to shake you to your very foundation. I find myself wanting to know HOW, WHEN, WHERE and WHY God is working, and my frustration is that I don’t have the answers. Yet with that said it was the lack of those answers that has led me to great confidence in what we are doing. The reason for my confidence, you ask. It is simple, I know the WHO!

In Act’s chapter 1 the disciples were dealing with just such a crisis of faith at the beginning of the birth of the church. They had responded to what the Lord had told them to stay in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirt but still they did not see how it was going to all fit together. Luke records four events that help change the lives of this small group of believers into folks that would turn the world upside down in 30 years.

II. Vs. 6-8 When, What and How

Vs. 6 In verse 3 Luke tells his readers that during the 40 days after the Lord’s resurrection He showed Himself alive by many infallible truths. He also tells us that He taught them, and we have strong clues in this text that there were **two primary areas** in of our Lord’s instruction.

- a. Vs. 3 Tells us that He spoke to them concerning the “**kingdom of God**”. This is clearly something they did not grasp as they are puzzled by it in verse 6.
- b. Vs. 4b, 5, 8 Secondly based upon these verses we see that Jesus spoke to them concerning the “**Spirit of God**”.

By their question in verse 6 we can see that these two topics led to their *misunderstanding as to the nature of God's kingdom and its relationship to The Holy Spirit*. Their question to Jesus reveals *three mistakes* that they had concerning these two topics.

1. *At this time: Timing "WHEN"*. This shows that *they expected the Holy Spirit to bring about a change immediately*.
2. *Restore: Nature "WHAT"*. This shows that *they thought that God's kingdom was political and territorial in nature*.
3. *Israel: Sphere "HOW"*. This shows that *they expected a national movement*.

They heard Jesus say, "*Fellows, wait a few days and you are going to receive power.*" And they thought He meant, "*Hey great in a few days Jesus is going to set up His kingdom here on earth and Israel will again be in power, now were talking!*"

Vs. 7 *Timing "WHEN"*. They wanted to know the specific time that Jesus was going to restore the kingdom of Israel. To which Jesus says, "*It is not for you to know the critical moments of God's development concerning Israel's future*." When our world is falling apart and life is changing in a direction we don't want; Jesus words of comfort is, "*It's not your business to figure out all of this.*"

Isn't that not our problem? We are always worrying about WHEN God's is going to do something. Deut. 29:29 tells us that, "*The secret things belong to the LORD our God.*" Certain things I'm just not going to know, but that should not paralyze us from doing what God has told us! *Obedience to the Lord isn't based upon our agreeing with His directions!*

Vs. 8 Here Jesus answers the other *two mistakes* that they made concerning the Holy Spirit's relationship to the Kingdom of God.

1. *Nature "WHAT"* : "*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me*": They were concerned with the *WHAT!* Jesus is saying God's kingdom is not political and territorial in nature. It's about the human heart. *The kingdom of God is His rule in the hearts and lives of His people by the Holy Spirit and that is only going to happen through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit* and not what country you live in or who is in the white House. Jesus said in John 18:36, "*My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world,*

*My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.” **Jesus was talking about the kingdom of God not the kingdom of Israel.** The word witnesses appears 29 times in the book of Acts and speaks to the fact that they were to be empowered with resurrection power spreading the kingdom of God. Now notice that Jesus says, “You shall **BE** My witnesses” NOT “You shall **DO** witnessing.” *A witness is a person who tells the truth concerning what they saw, heard and felt.* Thus, a witness of Jesus Christ is a person who tells the truth about Jesus. Peter said that the disciple’s, “*did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ but were **eyewitnesses** of His majesty.*” The point is that a person does not **DO** witnessing, no, they **ARE** witnesses. ***The only question is how effective are they?*** And here we are told that the effectiveness is based upon the power of the Holy Spirit. *These guys didn’t need an evangelism course they needed the power of the Holy Spirit so that they could tell the truth about Jesus!**

2. **Sphere “HOW”.** “*in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*” They had thought in nationalistic terms, “*the kingdom of Israel*”. But **Jesus has got a much larger boarder then just Israel.** Oh, their telling the truth would start out in Jerusalem, then it would spread to Judea and Samaria. Lastly it would spread throughout the world. I can only imagine what the disciples felt as Jesus was expanding their nationalistic boarders:
 - ***Jerusalem was the place where Jesus was tried and executed.***
 - ***Judea was where they had rejected His ministry.***
 - ***Samaria was where the Jews thought of it as a wasteland made up of half breads.***
 - ***The ends of the earth where all the gentiles who were only good to fuel the fires of hell.***

They were understanding the necessity of the Holy Spirits power to go to those places.

Remember that these are the final words of Jesus on earth and that during the last 40 days of

Jesus here on earth He spoke of two primary things, the Spirit of God and the kingdom of God.

We may not know the times, but you do know the **WHAT** (The kingdom of God) and **HOW** (The

Spirit of God)! **From Pentecost to the 2nd coming of Jesus we Christians are to be telling the**

truth about Him everywhere He places us by the power of the Holy Spirit. The whole of the

time between that day when 120 were gathered in the upper room till we see this same Jesus

coming back in like manor is to be filled up with a worldwide mission of empowered people

telling everyone the truth about Jesus! Paul says that, “we are ambassadors for Christ, as

though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.”

III. Vs.9-11 In like manor

Vs. 9-11 Luke use three different verbs to describe the event of the ascension of Jesus.

- a. Vs. 9 “taken up”
- b. Vs. 9 “received”
- c. Vs. 10 “went up”

Five times in this brief account we are told that the ascension took place visibly. Clearly Luke wants to establish the historical truth as to the eyewitness account of the ascension. This is the only historical account of what happened to Jesus and why to this day there is an empty tomb.

1. “*They watched*”
2. “*Out of their sight*”
3. “*They looked steadfastly*”
4. “*Why do you stand gazing*”
5. “*As you saw Him go*”

We are told that the event took place a Sabbath day’s journey from the temple. Tradition has it that in the time of the tabernacle no tent was to be further from the tabernacle then $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, so they kept this as the distance one could travel on the Sabbath. This fact would put the ascension on the backside of the Mount of Olives in an area Luke calls Bethany. Today if you go to Israel you can go to a Catholic Church called the “*The Church of the Holy Ascension*” and inside they claim to have the actual footprint where Jesus ascended from. The problem is that it is not where Luke tells us that Jesus ascended from.

In verse 10 we are told that the disciples, “*looked steadfastly*” toward heaven and the word indicates that they were more than just curiosity. *They were staring off into heaven with a look as they had just lost Jesus.* This is further emphasized by the loving rebuke of the angels who reassured them in verse 11. Now we don’t know anything about these two fellows who stood by them in white clothing. Some say they were angels others say they were Moses and Elijah who appeared with Jesus on the Mount of transfiguration.

Why did Jesus ascend this way? He could have just vanished but here He slowly ascends into heaven until He is a cloud of glory receives Him out of sight. I believe there are three practical reason for this:

1. **First, He had been appearing and then disappearing for 40 days clearly He wanted them to know that as for now He was not coming back.**
2. **Secondly, He wanted them to be assured of His coming again and that His 2nd coming again would be like the first: Physical, Visible and on the Mount of Olives!**
3. **Third, He didn't want the Church to be just standing around waiting for His return.**

It's the third reason that I want to finish with as an exhortation to us as we are soon to start a new year: This year in 2021; **Let's NOT be those who just stand around looking up into heaven worrying about when He is coming back.** It's a fact He is coming back just as He left, the same Jesus! But today is the time between when He left and until He comes back, and we are to be filled with His Spirit to tell the truth about Him to a world that has not heard and seen what we have concerning the truth about Jesus. Thays what the angels say, **"You have seen Him go and you will see Him come, but for now the Spirit must come and you must go into the world for Jesus!"**