

Acts—Series Overview

The Expansion of the Gospel Witness with Power

The book of *Acts* gives the account of God's faithful accomplishment of all that He promised in taking the gospel to the nations. It lays the groundwork for all that will take place as His Church awaits His return. Just as Jesus lived and spoke as the Father commanded, we now are called to do in the power of His Holy Spirit. While Jesus did this perfectly, we will strive imperfectly, constantly in need of the Holy Spirit's direction, power, and correction. Nevertheless, our faithful God will work even through our failing efforts and His gospel witness through us will prevail and penetrate every nation, tribe, & territory. For the praise of our King!

APPLYING GOD'S WORD

From Acts Chapter One

Please ask the Holy Spirit to guide you:

Bow Down! Kneel before our glorious King who is enthroned in heaven at the right hand of the Father.

How Are You (We) Using His Power? God has given us His Holy Spirit with power. Use that power to benefit some others at *FCCW* and in our neighborhood. Pick up the phone. Send an email. Have someone over. Encourage them in Christ.

Pray! Ask the Lord to work in us in these ways. Ask others to pray for you in these ways, too.

God's Word—Mini-Series Overview

The Book of God's Glory

God has revealed Himself to humanity through the sixty-six books of the Scriptures. He shows us in the Bible what He is like, what we were made to be, the horror of our rebellion against Him and its galaxy-wide consequences. It also presents His incredible promise to win us back to Himself through the unthinkable sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Let's look together at the wonder of Scripture and consider how its uniqueness should guide everything that we do.

Sermon Notes and Daily Devotional
First Congregational Church of Woodstock

Pastor Doug Warren
January 19th, 2020

Morning Service:

Acts 1: 4 – 11

The Restoration Is Happening

1. Jesus Baptizes His People with the Holy Spirit (4-5).
2. Jesus Is Restoring His Kingdom (6-8).
3. Jesus Has Ascended to His Heavenly Throne (9-11).

The promised restoration of the Kingdom of God is taking place right this moment. It is already in process as Christ is on His throne. Yet His Kingdom is not fully realized as it will be when He returns. We have His Holy Spirit as the down-payment for what is to come. How do we live in this reality as He is calling us instead of standing around looking into heaven? Let's trust Christ together as a congregation to live in the power of His Holy Spirit as His witnesses until He returns.

Evening Service:

Matthew 22: 23 – 46
Three-Part Series on the Word

A Case Study on The Bible

1. How Did Jesus Understand the Word of God?
2. How Do Liberals Often Misunderstand the Word of God?
3. How Do Conservatives Often Misunderstand the Word of God?

Our misunderstanding of the Bible (and the resultant misapplication of it) is grounded in our denying its authority. We need to correct both liberal and conservative biases against the Word and submit ourselves wholly to it by faith in Christ as the Living Word.

Taking Gathered Worship Home

The disciples had been devastated by Christ's death, then shocked by His resurrection. Jesus spent 40 days with them proving that He was indeed resurrected and helping them better understand what that means. Then just as they are ready to roll up their sleeves and get busy in the Kingdom of God in Israel, Jesus flies into heaven. What?! Where did He go? Why? Jesus told them the Holy Spirit would explain it all and empower them for the next stage as witnesses to Christ.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to meet with Jesus. Ask Christ to teach us His ways that we may walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Sunday AM

READ **Acts 1:4-11; Hebrews 12:18-29**. DISCUSS, Have we already received the Kingdom of God in Christ? How is that Kingdom working? How is it not yet fully restored? PRAY for God to empower us for His Kingdom work each day.

Sunday PM

READ **Matthew 22:23-46; Second Timothy 3:10-17**. What is the role of God's Word? Why is it necessary? PRAISE God for revealing Himself to us. REPENT of ways we disobey and disrespect His Word.

Monday

READ **Acts 1:4-5; John 1:29-34**. DISCUSS, What was John told by God that the Son of God would do? How did He give witness to Christ? PRAY for your neighbors, peers, friends & family asking God to show them His glory in Christ.

Tuesday

READ **Acts 1:6-8; Matthew 24:36-44** DISCUSS, What did the disciples misunderstand about the Kingdom of God? What did Jesus tell them? PRAY, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Wednesday

READ **Acts 1:6-8; Matthew 6:9-15**. DISCUSS, Why would Jesus have us pray for His Kingdom to come? Does He need our help? MEDITATE on the astonishing privilege God gives us to be His ambassadors and witnesses. REJOICE if you are a witness to Christ's sacrifice for you. PRAY, "Lord, thank You for sending us Your Holy Spirit. Help us to walk in His power."

Thursday

READ **Acts 1:9-11; Acts 7:55-56**. DISCUSS, Where is Jesus now? Why? REJOICE in the certainty that Jesus is on His throne. PRAY, "Lord, enable to trust You and follow Your Holy Spirit's leading as we await Your return. Amen."

Friday

READ **Acts 1:4-11**. How have you been growing in your understanding and application of this passage this week? REJOICE for Christ has not left us alone, but given us His promised Holy Spirit! PRAY for your neighbors who are deceived and unable to even see their own sin for what it really is. Pray for their repentance (and our continuing repentance). Pray that God will use you to bring them into His kingdom to the honor and praise of His name.

Saturday

PREPARE today for the gathered worship service tomorrow.

READ **Acts 1:12-14**. Come to worship tomorrow expecting to hear from God and to learn more about our God together. Pray for God's glory to be more and more manifested in the Woodstock area. Pray that He will use us to extend His grace as we celebrate it together.

Hebrews 12: 28 – 29

"Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire."