

Read Acts 1:1-11

6 *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*

7 *And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

9 *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

My remarks this morning will be with respect to verses 6-9. Let me say a few things by way of **introduction**. Jesus had risen from the dead. He had appeared to many who had told others. Many who were told did not believe even though Jesus had told them plainly that he would arise on the third day. Their hearts were hardened and they desperately needed the gift of the Holy Spirit before they were to embark on their world mission.

- i. Mark 16:14 says that He “upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.” They and we are bound by the authority of God to believe the witnesses, the Twelve Apostles, whose testimony is the New Testament.
- ii. They needed to grow up unto Christ and be no more infants. This would take place by the gift of the Holy Spirit, which would begin the church’s growth in understanding and doctrine. This growth continues through the book of Acts and in the times that follow and continues until this day. Even Peter needed to grow in understanding—not in the sense of new revelation [as Rome and fanatics pretend], but in wisdom and understand, according to Ephesians 1:17-23
- iii. This was a very bad question: “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” Calvin says “there are as many errors as words.” And lists these errors contained in the question:
 - a. They still dreamed of an earthly kingdom with military power, wealth, prestige and ease.
 - b. They thought that the present time was the time of restoration that the prophets spoke of. They wanted their wage and the beginning of the day before their labor; they wanted victory before the battle.
 - c. They thought the kingdom of God was the same as Israel according to the flesh.
 - d. They desired to know hidden things.
 - e. They thought that the resurrection of Christ meant that the kingdom would now be immediately restored according to all the errors above.

With this as preparation, I would speak of three things this morning; three commands that Christ gives to them to correct these errors. They must: I. Will to be ignorant; II. Wait until the time appointed; III. Witness the things they had seen and heard. **I. Will; II. Wait; III. Witness.**

- I. They must **WILL** to be ignorant. “De 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.
 - A. It is wicked to be ignorant of the things that God has plainly revealed: 2 Peter 3 says that the wicked are willingly ignorant of the destruction of the earth in the flood and that the present earth is kept in store, reserved unto fire for the day of judgment.
 - B. But there are things that God has not kept in his own power.
 1. Some of the times and seasons.
 - a. Men were given the sun, moon, stars and the tides and other evidences of the seasons of planting and harvesting; signs of good and bad weather; God has not kept these in His own power. Gen. 1:41 Gen 8:22
 - b. Men are given to know the plants and animals; for God gave Adam authority to name them and use them for his good, according to his own pleasure.
 2. We learn many things by experience, invention; science, philosophy that God has not kept in His own power.
 3. The prophets revealed many things of a general nature; and some things more specific: these were also not kept in God’s own power, for they were revealed to us, even though they may not be fully understood except in the far future.
 - C. Some things are specifically forbidden to us: to seek to closely into the light of God, but to seek Him only in the face of Jesus Christ. His incomprehensible knowledge and wisdom. The intricate weavings of His providence; the complete solutions to such things as the purpose for evil, the relationship between man’s responsibility and God’s sovereignty. We are to walk by faith; and full sight is not given to us, even in eternity, for even the angels cover their faces before God.
 - D. It is good to submit to God and will to be ignorant of such things.
- II. They were to **WAIT** until the time appoint of the Father for the coming of the Spirit.
 - A. The kingdom of God would be a kingdom of the Spirit, not of the flesh.
 1. Just as Abraham had to wait many years before the promise of the fleshly seed, Isaac, would be born, so the Apostles had to wait for the kingdom of God would be born, as it were by the coming of the Spirit.
 2. The church is born, not of a fleshly seed but by the word of God by the Spirit as Peter tells us: 1Peter 1:18-25 The great acts:
 - a. Redeemed by the precious blood of Christ: vs. 18
 - b. Faith and hope in God who raised Jesus from the dead: vs. 19
 - c. Purification of the soul: obeying the truth through the Spirit: vs. 22
 - d. This is a new birth by an incorruptible seed; not a corruptible one: vs. 23
 - e. The flesh profits nothing. Vs. 24,25

3. This was in God's hands: and they must WAIT for the Spirit. The kingdom would not come by their own power, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. They would receive "the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon them."

III. They must **WITNESS** the things that they had seen and heard.

- A. The Battle must come before the victory and celebration. The sowing before the reaping. The journey before the rest. The dying before the livings. The cross before the crown. The suffering before the reigning: 2 Tim. 2:11.
- B. The kingdom of God comes by the Spirit through preaching. Satan knows this and therefore his chief opposition comes against the preaching of the word of God.
 1. They did not have their own message: 2Cor. 2:7-16
 2. The wisdom that the apostles preached had been hidden, although ordained before the world.
 3. This wisdom was not invented by men: vs. 9
 4. The wisdom was revealed by the Spirit who knows the deep things of God.
 5. This wisdom was revealed in words. Vs. 13. These words were spoken by the apostles.
 6. Only spiritual men can receive these words and understand them. Fleshly men cannot receive them.
- C. They must look to the future and not for present rewards: They had a long journey ahead of them. Beginning at the most difficult place.
 1. Jerusalem, where the Lord was crucified.
 2. Judea, where the Lord had been rejected, having done works that would have saved Sodom if they had been done there.
 3. Samaria: where apostate, defiled, corrupt worship under the control of magicians, was offered in the name of God.
 4. They were to start there and then proceed to the ends of the earth. It would be a long and difficult task: let Paul describe it to you:

1Corinthians 4: 9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised.

11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place;

12 And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

13 Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day.

Application:

1. Let us humble ourselves before the Lord and be content with what He has revealed to us.

2. Let us serve Him faithfully as witnesses of the truth that is in Christ. This truth covers everything: we are to witness to the peasant and to the king, for both are called to humble themselves and serve the Lord, the poor because he is exalted in Christ, the rich because he is humbled and must do good to the godly and chase away the wicked, for Christ's the Lord of the realm, although not yet revealed to any but those of faith.

3. Let us pray that the kingdom would come; first in our own hearts as we put off the old and put on the new; secondly to the whole earth as God has promised.

4. Let us hope to the end for the grace that is to be given to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ, as Peter wrote in 1 Peter 1:

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.