

(Message #3 of **The Church: A Divine Design**)

**The Message of the Church**

Acts 1: 1-3

The book of Acts is a powerful account of the birth and advancement of the church after the resurrection and ascension of our Lord. Acts begins at a time unlike any prior to that day. The Lord had suffered upon the cross, risen victoriously from the grave, secured salvation for all humanity, and was about to ascend back to the Father. No doubt the apostles were filled with wonder and amazement, but they had a challenging task to fulfill. Jesus had completed His work here upon the earth and now they were to take the glorious gospel to the world.

No greater work has ever been done than sharing the gospel to a lost and dying world. There is nothing more important than sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. The work that began some 2,000 years ago continues today. The need to tell the wondrous gospel is just as great today as it was then.

That burden rests upon our shoulders. We are the body of Christ; we belong to Him and share an obligation to tell others of His saving grace. But as I pondered the gospel message and the power that it brings, I had to ask, what message are we sharing in our generation? What is the world hearing from the church today? Clearly the church is a known presence in the world, but are we conveying the right message?

It is imperative that we share the gospel in its fullness. Without the truth of the gospel, there is no hope for the perishing. Our vision and purpose must represent the gospel or we have failed in what we do. [Prov.29:18a – Where there is no vision, the people perish.](#) I really have no insight into other congregations, but I am concerned about the message that we are sending. Is it empty, self-righteous rhetoric or a life changing message?

In his introduction to Acts, Luke shares the fundamentals of the gospel message. If we are to present the gospel as we should, it must be a solid, biblical message. This evening I want to preach on: [The Message of the Church](#). As we look at these verses, ask yourself if we are conveying the gospel message. It must be:

**I. A Pointed Message** (1) – [The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach](#), By way of introduction Luke leaves no doubt to whom he has written. The book of Acts was presented to Theophilus with reference to the former treatise, Luke's first work, the gospel of Luke. We all know that the gospel of Luke recorded the life of Christ upon the earth. Luke had not written a book of current events, or mere historic facts about the cultural and political climate of the day; he had written the accounts of our Lord. Jesus was the focus of his gospel. He was the One that men needed to see.

▪ In Luke's opening remarks we find the [foundation of the gospel message](#); it must present Jesus. If the church doesn't present Jesus to a lost world, then our message is vain

and of no value. We are here to share Jesus with those who have never met Him! Jesus is the only way that men's lives will be changed. **Jn.12:32 – And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.**

▪ Our message is not about people or programs. I am thankful for what we have and the work we are doing, but our activities can't save men's souls. The message must be about Jesus. He is the reason we have met today. He is the source of our salvation. The world needs to hear of Jesus; it isn't about how great the congregation is or how the preacher preaches. Luke didn't write of his life experiences; he wrote of the Savior of the world. Are you sharing Jesus? Men don't need to hear of how we do it; they need to hear of Who has already done it! **Jn.3:30 – He must increase, but I must decrease.** If our message isn't focused on Jesus, it is no gospel message!

## **I. A Pointed Message (1)**

**II. A Personal Message (1b-2) – Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:** Luke wrote of the ministry of Jesus, all the things that He did here upon the earth. When you study the earthly ministry of Jesus and the reason for His birth, it is quickly apparent that Jesus came for people. He came to minister to those who needed salvation. We are the reason that Jesus came.

▪ We are the reason that Jesus suffered as no man ever had, the reason that He gave His life on the cross. Jesus came to redeem the lost. **Lu.19:10 – For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.** His wasn't a journey to see how men worshipped God or to inspect the traditions and workings within the Temple; Jesus came for souls!

▪ Many times in Scripture Jesus is found in the Temple or synagogues, but most often He is found among the people, the lowly, the sinners, the desperate, and needy. He was concerned about those who needed forgiveness from sin. This is confirmed in the parable of the great supper, **Lu.14:23 – And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.**

▪ We have not received the gospel to keep it locked away in a stained glass prison; there are souls out there that Jesus died for. There are folks who are lost in sin and headed for hell without Christ. Jesus is the gospel; He began this work and we are called upon to take it to the world.

▪ If the church's message isn't centered on reaching those who need Christ then we have missed the heart of God. There isn't a man, woman, or child who doesn't need to hear of Christ. The message isn't reserved for those who meet our expectations or even our standards; it is a whosoever gospel!

- Aren't you glad that someone cared enough to share Jesus with you? We must continue to take the glorious gospel to a lost and hurting world!

### **I. A Pointed Message** (1)

### **II. A Personal Message** (1b-2)

**III. A Powerful Message** (3a) – To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: Luke reveals that Jesus showed Himself alive after His passion. The word translated passion literally means "*suffering or crucifixion*."

- Luke says that Jesus was seen alive after He suffered and died upon the cross. Yes they nailed Him to a Roman cross, yes He bled and died there, yes they placed His dead body in a tomb where it lay for three days, but praise God Jesus came out alive. Neither death nor the grave could hold our Lord; He rose victorious in life!

- We have the wonderful message that Jesus lives today. He is not a "has been" or a "will be again." He is right now seated in power and authority. Mk.16:6 – Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. Ours isn't a message of hopelessness or defeat; it is a message of victory.

- The gospel message stands alone in that we serve a risen Lord! The humanist are depending upon themselves achieving harmony with the universe; scientologist are depending on gaining enough truth and knowledge to sustain them for eternity; Buddhist worship a statue of Buddha which can neither speak nor move; Muslims deny that Christ was the Son of God. There message has no power; it is merely a hope in things that can never sustain or save the dying soul.

- We have the truth that can set men free! There is power to transform lives through the gospel of Christ. 2 Cor.5:17 – Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. Christian, what else has changed your life as the gospel? Has there not been a complete transformation since you believed in Christ? There is power in the truth of Christ our Lord!

**IV. A Persuasive Message** (3b) – To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: Luke knew that his words would be read by unbelieving Jews, those who denied the resurrection of Christ. However the resurrection could not be disputed. Jesus showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs.

- He revealed Himself in the garden to Mary; He walked with those on the Emmaus road; He met with the disciples while they hid in fear; He prepared a meal for Peter and the others on the shores of Galilee. Paul declared that Jesus was seen of over 500 hundred brethren at

one time, of which most lived at the time of his writing to the Corinthians. There was no doubt in Luke's mind that Jesus rose and lived.

- The message that we share with the world is not a fable or fairy tale; it is the truth of a risen Savior. I can't explain to you what I felt when the Holy Spirit dealt with my heart, but I saw myself lost and condemned in need of salvation. I know that Jesus lives today because He lives within my heart. I have seen too many lives that were wrecked by sin completely changed. There is no doubt that Jesus lives!
- There are souls that you know who are desperate for peace in their hearts. Their souls are yearning for assurance of life beyond the grave. Many may try to put up a front of denial, but deep down there is a longing for something that the world has been unable to supply.
- We have what the world needs and desires. Talk to them about the Lord and let the Holy Spirit do the work. There is power and persuasion in the gospel of Christ! [Rom.1:16 – For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.](#)

#### **I. A Pointed Message (1)**

#### **II. A Personal Message (1b-2)**

#### **III. A Powerful Message (3a)**

#### **IV. A Persuasive Message (3b)**

**V. A Promising Message (3c)** – Jesus was seen alive after His passion, [speaking of those things pertaining to the kingdom of God.](#) Luke closes his introduction to Acts with a reference to the kingdom of God, to the body of Christ, those who have the hope of heaven. His wasn't a message that would run out of steam or die out in a few years. Luke spoke of an eternal hope for all who believe.

- Who else is offering what the Lord is in our world today? There is nothing that can compare to what the Lord has promised those who belong to Him. I realize that many are blinded by sin, but if they would only listen and consider the gospel, they would have to agree that it is the greatest news ever told. Those who receive the gospel have the promise of life beyond the grave. Who wouldn't want to live in the presence of Almighty God and enjoy the beauty and bounty of heaven for eternity?
- I can assure you, if those whom we share the gospel with ever realize what is being offered, they will not reject it. The Bible is clear in regard to the eternal existence of the soul. All will continue after death in heaven or hell. In Jesus there is hope for life beyond the grave, [1 Cor.15:51-58.](#)

- We have the opportunity and the obligation to share this message of hope with those who have never believed. Aren't you glad for what you have in Christ our Lord? Aren't you glad that you are no longer bound in sin, but have the promise and assurance of a better day? If so why not commit to sharing the good news with others in hopes that they too will come to Christ?

As I considered these verses and the message that Luke presented, I was personally challenged to share the gospel with those I meet. The world will not present Jesus to them. If we are to see our friends and loved ones come to Christ, we must do our part and share the gospel with them.

What kind of message are you sharing? Does your life reflect the words you speak? Are you concerned about those who are lost in sin? Wouldn't it be terrible to stand before God in judgment with the blood of a close friend on your hands because you never told them of Jesus?

I pray that we will do our part in sharing the right message with the world. Why not come and ask the Lord to help you boldly proclaim the gospel of Christ? The gospel has been presented today. If you are lost, you have heard enough of Christ to come to Him. Why not come and ask Him to save you today?