**SBC – Nov. 15, 2026**
**Acts 1:1-8 (NKJV)**
***"Promise of the Spirit"***

**#1**

***Prayer***

Welcome to the study of the book of Acts. It provides a historical overview of the first 30 years of the Church Age.

> Imagine what it would be like if the Book of Acts wasn't in the Bible. You pick up your Bible and see the ministry of Jesus ending in the Gospel of John; next you read about a man named Paul writing to the followers of Jesus in Rome. You might wonder, *Who was Paul? How did the gospel get from Jerusalem to Rome?* The Book of Acts answers these questions and gives helpful background for understanding the letters Paul wrote to the churches and individuals.
> – ***David Guzik***

***The human author of Acts was Luke.*** Luke was a close companion of the apostle Paul and evidently got a lot of his information from him.

> Luke arrived in Jerusalem with Paul (see Acts 21:17), and he left with him again on the journey to Rome more than two years later (see 24:27; 27:1). In those two years, Luke had plenty of time to research and write his Gospel and the Book of Acts. – ***David Guzik***

Luke was evidently a Gentile, making him UNIQUE among the writers of Scripture (cf. Col. 4:10-14). He was a doctor (Col. 4:10). As mentioned, he was a traveling companion of the apostle Paul (Acts 16-28). He also was a careful historian, as seen in his research prior to his writings (Lk. 1:1-4). He wrote the book of Luke and also the book of Acts, the combination of which accounts for 28% of the NT, which is a higher percentage than any other NT writer, including the apostle Paul.

***Date written***: c. AD 60-63  It was probably written from Rome.

***Purpose***: The primary purpose seems to be historical; that is, to record the rise and spread of Christianity throughout the known world. It really is an early history of the church. It gives historical information from the ASCENSION of Christ to the imprisonment of Paul in Rome. Thus, it covers about a 30-year period of time. Acts sets forth the Divine origin of the CHURCH and records the GROWTH of the church, through the propagation of the gospel, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Although transitional, the book shows that the Christian movement was ONE movement, whether the followers were Jews or Gentiles. In the CHURCH we are all ONE in Christ (cf. Gal. 3:28).

***Slide # 1***

***Theme***: *The Birth and Early History of the Church*

***Key Verse:***

**Acts 1:8 (NKJV)**
**8** But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

***Outline***:

Chps. 1-7 Witnessing in ***Jerusalem*** (Peter – Jews)
Chps. 8-12 Witnessing in ***Judea and Samaria*** (Phillip-Jew/Gentile)
Chps. 13-28 Witnessing to the ***ends of the earth*** (Paul-Gentiles)

- Some outline the book of Acts around what are called the SEVEN progress reports.

***Slide # 2***

***The 7 progress reports***

1. Acts 2:47
2. Acts 6:7
3. Acts 9:31
4. Acts 12:24
5. Acts 16:5
6. Acts 19:20
7. Acts 28:30-31

In the book of Acts, we have the record of THREE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS.

***Slide # 3***

***THREE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS IN ACTS***

First Journey – 2 years – Galatia (Acts 13-14)
Second Journey – 3 years – Macedonia, Achaia, Greece (Acts 15-18)
Third Journey – 4 years – Asia (Acts 18-21)

Also in the book of Acts, we have the record of Paul's three trials.

***Slide # 4***

***THREE TRIALS OF PAUL IN ACTS***

Paul on trial before Felix (Acts 24)
Paul on trial before Festus (Acts 25)
Paul on trial before Agrippa (Acts 25-26)

Paul in prison in Rome (Acts 28)

Many believe that Paul was released for a short time after this first imprisonment in Rome, followed by a second imprisonment culminating in his execution.

***Assorted Background Information:***

Acts is a sequel to the gospel of Luke. The book of Luke left off with the great commission and promise of the coming Spirit (Lk. 24:47-49). This is where the book of Acts picks up – with the arrival of the Holy Spirit to empower the disciples to carry out the Great Commission (Acts 1-2.

***Slide # 5***

**Old Testament - Preparation**
**Gospels - Manifestation**
***Acts – Propagation***
**Epistles – Explanation**
**Revelation – Consummation**

The two leading men in Acts are Peter (chps. 1-12) and Paul (chps. 13-28).

The change from talking about *"they*" to talking about "*we"* indicates that at this point the author (Luke) has joined Paul in his journeys. The "*we*" sections are found in 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; and 27:1-28:16.

The book of Acts is transitional in nature. In Acts 2 the Holy Spirit was given to Jewish believers; in Acts 8 to Samaritan believers who were half Jew and half Gentile; and in Acts 10 the Holy Spirit was given to pure Gentiles. The book provides a bridge between the gospels and the epistles. TRANSITION is a key word to remember when interpreting Acts.

***Slide # 6***

***7 Transitions in Acts***

1. A historical transition from the GOSPELS to the EPISTLES.
2. From a Synagogue emphasis to a Church emphasis.
3. From Israel to the Church.
4. From Christ's physical presence to the Spirit's being sent.
5. From the Spirit being WITH believers to Him being IN believers.
6. From Jews to Gentiles.
7. From Law to Grace.

If one does not properly understand the transitional nature and the historical nature of the book of Acts, they will not have a proper understanding of what is normative for the Church Age. In such a case, one may wrongly try to make normal what God in fact intended to be transitional in nature. Proper understanding looks to the epistles for a further understanding of what is to be considered as normative.

For example, the tongues phenomenon described in Acts is only explained in 1 Corinthians 14:20-22, where it says it was a sign targeted to unbelievers. Acts, while stating the phenomenon, does not directly deal with it doctrinally. Remember, Acts is a history of the early church, and it is transitional in nature. This will greatly help in gaining a proper understanding.

What Acts **demonstrates** in terms of unifying spiritual realities, the doctrinal books of the epistles clearly **define** (cf. 1 Cor. 12:13 & 14:20-22).

The main focus of the book is historical and not doctrinal. It emphasizes "*what happened*" without necessarily stressing "*why it happened*". The epistles enlarge upon doctrinal explanation, but the focus of ACTS is a history of what happened.

Acts is a historical book. Our faith is a historical faith! It's not just mystical or subjective, but rather rooted in real history.

Some have titled the book of Acts, "*The Acts of the Apostles*", but really it is better titled, "***The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles***." The book of Acts mentions the Holy Spirit more than any other book referencing Him, 60- 70 times.

**Acts 1:1–8 (NKJV)**
**1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,**

The former account is the gospel of Luke.

We don't know much about Theophilus. His name means "Lover of God" or "Friend of God". We don't know if he was a believer or an unbeliever. Some surmise that Luke may have written the gospel of Luke to him as a prolonged tract.

Here in Acts 1:1 he simply addresses him as "***Theophilus***" whereas in Luke 1:3 he addressed him as "***most excellent Theophilus***". This title "most excellent" suggests that he may have been a Roman official of some type, perhaps a man of high social status and wealth (cf. Acts 23:26, 24:3, 26:25). It is further suggested that perhaps the change from the formal address, ***"most excellent Theophilus,***" to just "***O Theophilus***" may be indicative of a change in relationship between Luke and Theophilus. Perhaps Theophilus had now become a believer, and Luke feels more comfortable in addressing him more casually. But we don't really know.

The former account (the gospel of Luke) spelled out all that Jesus BEGAN both to do and teach. We often emphasize, and rightfully so, the FINISHED WORK of Jesus on the cross. In fact, a saving faith believes in this finished work. It is essential. When Christ died for our sins, He said, "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30). After He finished paying for our sins and rose from the dead, He sat down at the right hand of God, indicating that His redemptive work was complete (cf. Heb. 1:3; 10:12). So serious is this that if anyone tries to add to this finished work, they are guilty of counting the blood of the covenant a common thing and insulting the Spirit of grace. They are in fact holding to a false gospel and are accursed (cf. Gal. 1:6-9, Heb. 10:29).

But there is another aspect of Christ's work that is not yet completed. Do you know what it is? It is the work of building His church. In Matthew 16:18, Christ said He would build His Church – which was yet future at that point. But Christ announced it and introduced what was coming.

He laid the foundation in His teaching and in His cross-work for what is now to proceed in the book of Acts.

There are two main thrusts of what Jesus began to do and teach as found in the gospel of Luke related to the kingdom and to salvation.

***Slide # 7***

The Gospel of Luke:
Began to DO and TEACH – Two Lines of Thought

***Sign Miracles*** (Do)
- ***Kingdom Truth*** (Teach)

***Cross/Resurrection*** (Do)
-***Gospel Truth*** (Teach)

What Jesus began to do and teach as recorded in Luke continues even to this day in that He is building a FOREVER FAMILY of born-again believers. This is the great work of Christ during this church age, and this work continues on. The cross-work is finished, but the work of evangelism and church building continues, which ultimately has kingdom implications, as believers are ultimately kingdom people headed for the kingdom.

***Slide # 8***

> In the New Testament, the Book of Acts follows immediately after the four Gospels. In the Gospels is the life of Jesus is presented, in Acts the lives of His followers. In the Gospels, the One Who is Savior is depicted; in Acts, those who are saved. In the Gospels, Jesus' teachings may be found; in Acts, the teaching of the apostles. In the Gospels we have what Jesus did on earth for His Church; in Acts we have what Jesus does from heaven through His Church. In the Gospels we have the message reaching the borders of Israel; in Acts the message reaches to the ends of the earth. – ***Author unknown***

Jesus continues His work today through the Church, but make no mistake: this is His work. What He began to do and teach in Luke now continues on in the church age.

**2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,**

"***Taken up***" looks back to Luke 24:51, where Christ was carried up to heaven while blessing the apostles.

But before He left, He, through the Holy Spirit, had given specific commands (or orders) to the apostles. These were the new "marching orders" for a new age – the Church Age that was about to spring forth.

The apostles, in effect, were the generals. They were the special authoritative representatives of Christ personally chosen by Him. It was specifically to them that He gave these orders. All the way through the book of Acts, we see the apostles were special.

The word "***apostle***" simply means ***"sent one***." It can be used in a general sense as well as a technical sense. When used of those specifically appointed and sent out by Christ, the sense is always technical, meaning those who were given special apostolic authority to personally represent Christ in terms of the New Testament message, which was confirmed with special supernatural sign-miracles.

This is the consistent pattern. Christ gives the message to the apostles, and then they, as His authoritative representatives, give the message to Christ's people. Thus the apostles had a unique calling, as they spoke with authority for Jesus Christ. The early church recognized this. In Acts 2:42 we see that they "***continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine***".

**3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.**

One of the great emphases in the book of Acts is the message that Jesus is ALIVE. Jesus did not appear to everyone after His resurrection. He appeared selectively. Yes, on one occasion there were more than 500 people present (cf. 1 Cor. 15:6) and so forth, but for the most part Jesus appeared to these apostles on and off for a period of 40 days following His resurrection (cf. Acts 10:39-43).

It was especially to them that Jesus presented many infallible proofs. The evidence was overwhelmingly convincing.

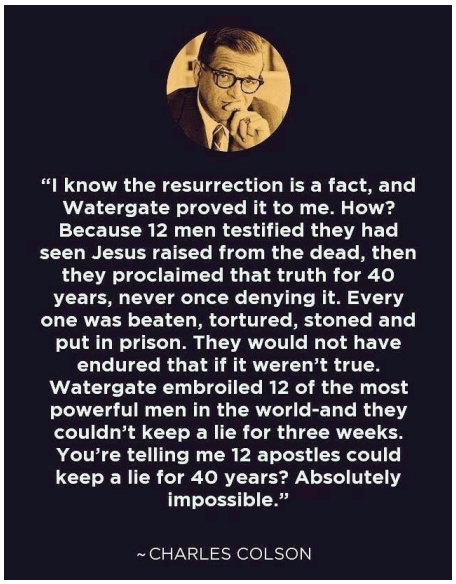
> "Infallible proofs" is one word in the Greek (*tekmerion*) and occurs only this one time in the New Testament.

> It emphasizes that the evidences for Christ's resurrection were not philosophical speculations but certain facts. It is appropriate that the word occurs only once, for no other event of biblical history has been confirmed more certainly than His bodily resurrection.
>
> – ***Henry M. Morris***

The evidence was so overwhelming that, according to early church history, all the apostles willingly died a martyr's death for the truth of Christ, with the exception of John, who was exiled to Patmos and then died of old age.

There is never a hint anywhere that they had any doubts about the truth of the risen Lord. They were totally convinced and were willing to die for the truth of the risen Christ. Think about this. If one person lies, it often comes out. If several people lie, it almost always comes out. If 11 people lie, it does not remain hidden for very long. These men were all totally convinced; they all told the same story of seeing Jesus alive. They never deviated from their testimony, and essentially all sealed their testimony with their blood.

***Slide # 9***




It was this rock-solid proof and truth that drove the growth of the early church in the book of Acts. The truth of the risen Christ was so strong it could not be held back. Those who knew the truth could not be silenced. No matter what anybody said, did, or thought, they knew the truth and would not be moved.

Someone has well said, *"The sight of the resurrected Christ released the life of heaven in the early believers."*

But as Jesus appeared to the apostles after His resurrection, He provided many infallible proofs, and He was also teaching them. And what was He teaching them about? Things that pertained to the kingdom of God.

We might expect at this point that Jesus would be teaching them about the church, but the emphasis here is that He continued to teach them about the coming kingdom.

The kingdom in view is always the same kingdom prophesied in the OT that would be a literal kingdom on the earth where Messiah would reign (cf. Isa. 2:2; 11:6-12; Dan. 2:44; Zech. 14:9). This was the kingdom John the Baptist spoke of as being at hand. This was the kingdom that Jesus presented as being at hand during His ministry, on the condition that the people repent and receive Him on His terms for Who He was.

It was important for them to know that the cross did not nullify the kingdom. God's kingdom program was still intact. The goal of history ever marches toward the kingdom. That has not changed!

Consistently in the gospels, as Jesus offered the kingdom, He backed it up with supernatural sign miracles. We might call these "kingdom-miracles," as they offered proof that Jesus was the Messiah offering the kingdom.

***Slide # 10***

> **Matthew 4:23 (NKJV)**
> **23** And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, **preaching the gospel of the kingdom**, and **healing all kinds** of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

***Slide # 11***

> **Acts 1:3…**
>
> … many infallible **proofs**…
>
> …pertaining to the **kingdom** of God.

***Slide # 12***

> **Hebrews 2:3–4 (NKJV)**

> **3** how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be **spoken by the Lord**, and was confirmed to us by **those who heard Him,** [apostles]
>
> **4** God also **bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles,** and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?
>
> **Hebrews 6:5 (NKJV)**
> **5** and have tasted the **good word** of God and the **powers** [miracles] of the age to come [the kingdom]

Consistently, the New Revelation message of Christ and His apostles was accompanied by kingdom sign-miracles. The ultimate goal of all history, including the Church Age, is the coming kingdom. The sign-miracles of Christ proved He is the Messiah who ultimately brings in the kingdom – which is the goal of history. The sign-miracles of the apostles proved that they were an extension of Christ's ministry.

However, as Christ is about to point out, the kingdom was not to be immediately realized. Now there was to be an interlude that we call the **church age**. They needed to know that the kingdom was still coming, but they also needed to know that in the meantime Jesus was going to build a forever family of believers called the church.

Remember, at this point they were basically clueless as to what the plan was. So Christ is walking them through it one step at a time.

**4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me;**

Verses 1-3 were introductory, but now in verses 4 and 5 he spells out his major premise that will drive the entire narrative of the book, namely the coming of the Spirit and what this means to the Church.

For the moment, they were to sit tight in Jerusalem and just WAIT. We know it was 50 days from Passover until Pentecost. Since Jesus had been appearing to them on and off for 40 days (v. 3), this would mean that their wait in Jerusalem would be for just 10 days (cf. Acts 1:3, 2:1).

The promise of the Father is the special coming of the Holy Spirit as referenced back in Joel 2:28-29 and applied in partial fulfillment to the Day of Pentecost by Peter in Acts 2:16 (see also Lk. 24:49). Both John the Baptist (cf. Mt. 3:11, Mk. 1:8, Lk. 3:16, Jn. 1:33), and Jesus had prophesied of this future coming of the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn. 14:16-18, 26, 15:26-27, 16:7-15).

***Slide # 13***

> **John 14:16–17 (NKJV)**
> **16** And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—
> **17** the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells **with you** and will be **in you**.

This denotes a change. The Spirit up to this point had been "**with**" them, but now He would be "**in"** them. This transition took place on the day of Pentecost.

This "***Promise of the Father***" ties back to the OT promises of New Covenant realities which would involve the Spirit being poured out (cf. Ezek. 36:26-27; 39:29; Joel 2:28-29; Zech. 12:10). The promise of a New Covenant is intimately linked with the Spirit living in God's people.

> These early apostles and believers were told to wait, showing the change that came in the church age. They were in the transitional period associated with the birth of the church. – ***John MacArthur***

**5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."**

John the Baptist baptized with water. The word "baptized" literally means "immersed." John immersed people in water, but this ritual signified repentance. It was called ***"a baptism of repentance***" (Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3). Thus, John's baptism IDENTIFIED people as those who were repentant. It was an outward symbol of repentance.

"**But"** is a contrast word. In contrast to John's baptism, there would be this coming baptism of the Spirit.

***Slide # 14***

> The fact that Jesus contrasted the baptism of the Spirit with the water baptism of John the Baptist indicates that the baptism of the Spirit does not involve water. – ***Dr. Harold Berry***

In the NT there are 7 references to baptism in the Spirit. Five are prophetic, including the one pronounced here in verse 5 by Jesus, and the other four by John the Baptist (cf. Mt. 3:11, Mk. 1:8, Lk. 3:16, Jn. 1:33). One reference is historical, as seen in Acts 11:15-16, and one is doctrinal, as found in 1 Corinthians 12:13, which explains the MEANING of baptism in the Spirit.

So if you really want to know the meaning of SPIRIT BAPTISM, where do you have to look? Well, you have to go to 1 Corinthians 12:13, which plainly tells us the significance of it.

***Slide # 15***

> **1 Corinthians 12:13 (NKJV)**
> **13** For by one Spirit **we were all baptized into one body**—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have **all been made to drink into one Spirit.**

Spirit baptism is all about the work of the Spirit. We have nothing to do with it. In and of itself, it is non-experiential. Spirit baptism takes place IMMEDIATELY at the time of saving faith. Two things happen at that time.

The Holy Spirit comes to live in every believer at the moment of saving faith (cf. Rom. 8:9). And simultaneously with that reality, the Spirit places the believer into the body of Christ. This is purely a spiritual reality.

In Spirit baptism, we are connected to the Spirit, and the Spirit connects us to the body of Christ – the spiritual family of God. The common denominator of all believers is that we all share in the same Spirit! He is the connector of all of us. We all share the same faith, and we all share in the Spirit. This is what unites us.

This was the BIG DEAL on the Day of Pentecost. It was the coming of the Spirit that would unite all the true believers and place them into the body of Christ. The big thing about the Day of Pentecost is that it was the BIRTHDAY OF THE CHURCH. The church was born, and the uniting, bonding agent was the Holy Spirit. The experiences were beside the point.

They served an important initial purpose, but the main point is the Spirit's uniting and placing all believers into the mystical body of Christ.

Simply put: John IDENTIFIED repenters with the ritual of water baptism; but Christ would now IDENTIFY His people with the Holy Spirit. That is really all this statement is saying. The defining reality of the Church is our union with the Spirit who unites us all together in one body.

Someone says: But what about the experience of speaking in tongues that accompanied the coming of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? I will deal with that when I get to chapter 2, but suffice it to say that on the day of Pentecost, special phenomena accompanied the coming of the Spirit to mark this special event. But then we don't have it specifically stated as happening again for another 5 years until the transitional inclusion of the Gentiles in chapters 10 and 11. And even then the Day of Pentecost was unique in that never again did tongues of fire appear as resting on the people, etc. Again, we note the TRANSITIONAL nature of the book and that the phenomenon which is transitional is not normative.

I am of the conviction that the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was a totally unique and non-repeatable historical event. Never again do we see the fire and wind combination repeated as found on the day of Pentecost (cf. Acts 2:2-3). The subsequent outpourings with the Samaritans (Acts 8), then the Gentiles (Acts 10), and finally those of John the Baptist's converts (Acts 19) were all extensions of the Pentecost event and were not repeated in the same foundational way. Jesus poured out the Spirit as He did on the Day of Pentecost, and He only did this once.

***Slide # 16***

> **Acts 2:33 (NKJV)**
> **33** Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, **He poured out** this which you now see and hear.

Christ repeatedly said He would send the Spirit, and He did this on the Day of Pentecost. It was a singular, unrepeatable event marking the coming of the Spirit and the birthday of the Church. This exact language is not used in reference to subsequent outpourings, arguing that they really were an extension of the original outpouring (cf. Acts 2, 8, 10, 19).

***Slide # 17***

> In the book of Acts, there are three "outpourings" of the Holy Spirit, to three different people groups at three different times. The first was to Jews and proselytes in Jerusalem (Acts 2). The second was to a group of believing Samaritans (Acts 8). The third was to a group of believing Gentiles (Acts 10). Significantly, Peter was present at all three outpourings. Three times, God sent the Holy Spirit with demonstrable signs, as the Great Commission was being fulfilled. The same Holy Spirit coming upon Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles in the same manner in the presence of the same apostle kept the early church unified. There was not a "Jewish" church, a "Samaritan" church, and a "Roman" church—there was one church, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5). – ***Gotquestions.org***

Remember the book of Acts is transitional in nature, and God little by little brought all into conformity to the reality of Pentecost. What is normative is spelled out by Paul in Ephesians 4 where he outlines 7 spiritual unities that apply to all believers without exception.

***Slide # 18***

> **Ephesians 4:4–6 (NKJV)**
> **4** There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;
> **5** one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**;
> **6** one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

The outpouring of the Spirit and Spirit Baptism are really descriptive of the same foundational event, but described from complementary perspectives. The outpouring from above signifies God's sovereign initiative and action, while Spirit Baptism signifies how believers are incorporated into the body of Christ by the Spirit.

Whenever anyone comes to faith, they are immediately made to partake of the Pentecost event, as they are instantly made partakers of the Spirit and immersed into the body of Christ by the Spirit. Thus, the outpouring and baptism of the Spirit continue to take effect, but without the phenomena that accompanied the original day of Pentecost. The BIG IDEA is that every believer now has the Spirit and has been placed into the body of Christ by the Spirit, but without the sign phenomena that accompanied the uniqueness of the Day of Pentecost.

Also note that this introduction to “Church Truth” puts an emphasis on the fact that this is a corporate reality. Church is a “*together*” thing, not something you do alone. Note in verse 4, “being assembled together,” and then “*He commanded them*” (plural). And then in verse 5, “*you”* plural shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” If you live your so-called Christianity in isolation, you really need to check yourself. The Church from the very beginning is a PLURAL – TOGETHER thing. It is a spiritual reality brought about by the Holy Spirit, but then it is intended to function collectively, not individually in isolation.

**6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”**

Many times we note how slow the disciples were to “get it,” and some accuse them of the same here. But in reality this showed some serious theological understanding. In the OT, Israel in effect lived under the rule of God (a Theocracy) from the time at Mount Sinai until the Babylonian Captivity. Since that time, no Davidic King has sat upon the throne. But the OT also promised a future day of restoration when a Son of David would sit upon the throne forever (cf. Lk. 1:31-33; 2 Sam. 7:12-17).

This future time of restoration is closely connected to the coming of the Spirit. So you see, when Jesus talked about the kingdom and also about the coming of the Spirit, they naturally associated this with the coming kingdom.

They were thinking that the promised coming of the Spirit would coincide with the timing of the kingdom being set up as brought out by the OT prophets (cf. Isa. 2:2-4; 32:15-20, 44:3-5; Jer. 31:27-34; Ezek. 39:28-29; Joel 2:28-3:1; Amos 9:11-15; Zech. 12:8-10). And so they legitimately asked: “***Will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”***

I actually give them high marks on this thoughtful question. Also, they did not yet understand the reality of an interval between Christ’s first coming and His second coming. So naturally they were thinking perhaps NOW was the time.

**7 And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.**

Note: Jesus does not rebuke them for having the wrong idea about the coming kingdom, as some imply. They were right in that it is yet future and has not yet come.

Jesus Himself had been teaching about this coming kingdom as promised in the OT, etc. They were right to anticipate its coming, but Jesus now educates them to the fact that the TIMING OF ITS COMING is a Divine secret and in accordance with the Father's prerogative. The timing is God the Father's business and is not to be their concern (cf. Deut. 29:29).

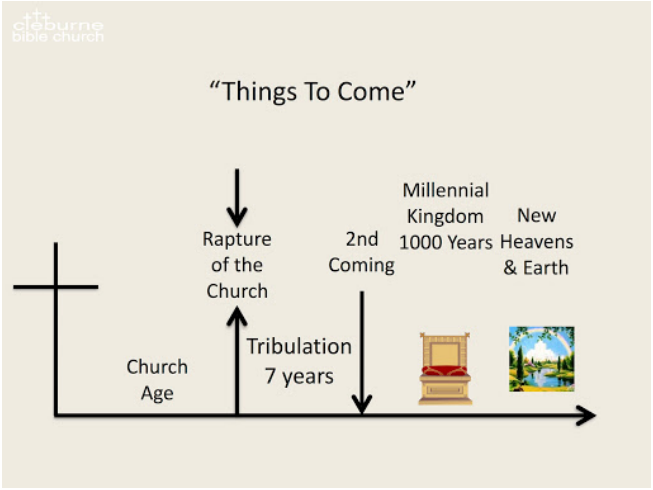
The word "***times***" is the Greek word "*chronous,*" from which we get the English word "chronology". This word describes the **duration** of time or the idea of how long. We don't know HOW LONG before the Lord will set up His kingdom.

The word "***seasons***" is "*kairous*" and it is the idea of "*turning points*" or "*major shifts in history*." There are a lot of "turning points" in history, but in terms of dating the coming of the kingdom, we cannot discern this.

Paul uses these very same two words in 1 Thessalonians 5:1 and goes on to say, "*you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night*." We should know this PERFECTLY too!

The Day of the Lord "time" that will usher in the Kingdom comes as a thief in the night. No one knows when it is coming. It will take the world by surprise. The Day of the Lord "time" that will usher in the kingdom follows immediately on the heels of the Church age. Both the rapture of the church and the Day of the Lord come as a thief in the night, and both happen suddenly (cf. Matt. 24:43; 1 Thess. 5:2). They are distinct but closely related. First comes the great snatching up of the church as found in 1 Thess. 4, and then in 1 Thessalonians 5 the Day of the Lord judgment immediately follows, culminating in the 2nd coming and the kingdom.

**Slide # 19**



We have no idea when the Rapture will take place! That's why we are to constantly LIVE READY. It is ever imminent – meaning it could happen at any time. LIVE READY!

Now, if we have no idea when the Rapture will take place, we consequently have no idea when the Day of the Lord will take place, and consequently no idea when the Second Coming will take place when Christ comes to set up His kingdom. This is all a mystery to us and not for us to know. However, once the Antichrist signs a 7-year covenant with Israel, all will be able to know with precision that Christ will return 7 years later. The dating of the Antichrist's timeframe is dated often, and with great precision (cf. Dan. 7:25, Dan. 9:27, Dan. 12:7, Matt. 24:15; Rev. 11:2, Rev. 11:3, Rev. 12:6, Rev. 13:5). And we know that his time ends with the Lord destroying him "*with the brightness of His coming*," as it says in 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

So until the signing of the 7-year covenant, we have no idea of the timing of the kingdom restoration. But once that covenant is signed, all will be able to know the basic time frame with precision, as Christ will come to earth precisely 7 years later (see chart).

Matthew 24 is the prophetic seed plot that clearly shows the two phases of Christ's coming. The first (the Rapture) happens unexpectedly when life is going along as "normal" (see Matt. 24:36-51). Four times in verses 39, 42, 43, and 44 Christ says the time of His coming is unknown. However, then in relation to the Tribulation Period (see Matt. 24:4-35), He says that when they see all these things (the things of the Tribulation), then they will know His coming is near – "at the doors!" (Matt. 24:33).

As we study prophecy, we get excited as we see what appears to be God setting the stage for the final end drama that will usher in the kingdom, and yet we have to say we don't know with any specificity when it is going to happen. We do see trends of apostasy, and as Hebrews 10:25 says, we do, in general, see "the Day approaching." And yet not with specificity.

The Church has not been given specific dates or a specific timeline. Rather, specific dates and specific timelines relate to Israel after the Church is gone. We are called to live ready in light of His imminent return and, in the meantime, focus on sharing the gospel. This is our mission, and we are not to be distracted.

Date setters have always been around, and they are always wrong. Christ plainly told us that in the Church Age it is not for us to know the timing related to the coming kingdom.

This is one of the secret things that "belong to the LORD our God" (Deut. 29:29). He will bring in the kingdom, and He will do it according to His own sovereign time schedule, which at this point is hidden.

**8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."**

Here is what the text has been building to. We are introduced to a whole new era – the Church Age, which is all about the Spirit. Our focus at this point is not to be on the kingdom but on what Christ is doing right now in the world – which is building His Church. This is Church time – not kingdom time. Here is Christ's Master Plan for building His Church!

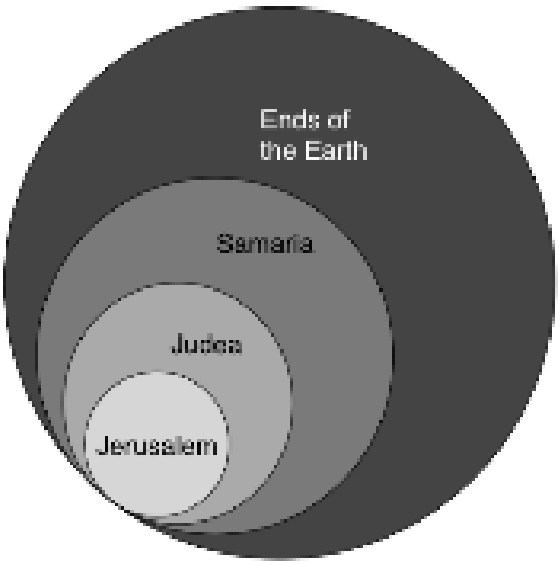
And in order to build His Church, Christ sent the Spirit – not only to incorporate the believers into one Body (Spirit baptism) but also to empower us to be Christ's witnesses. We need power. The word power is a translation of the Greek word *dunamis* from which we get our English word dynamite. It refers to miraculous supernatural strength. To be Christ's witnesses, we need Holy Spirit power! And we have it!

The coming of the Spirit would powerfully transform their lives. How? To be Christ's witnesses. We get our English word "martyr" from the Greek word (*Martus*) translated as witness. The word "witness" is found 29 times in the book of Acts. It denotes standing for God's truth even if it means death! The inevitable result of the Spirit's coming would be power to witness BOLDLY for Christ. This is really the story of the book of Acts, which records the first 30 years of church history.

What an incredible prophecy this is. Here is this motley crew of mainly simple Galileans who, in that day, were largely considered despised nobodies, and in the Name of Christ they are going to impact the ends of the earth. How could it be? Only by the power of the Spirit working through them, empowering them to be His witnesses.  And yet, in a few short years, their testimony rippled through the known world to where it was said of them that they had "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6).

As stated earlier, Acts 1:8 serves as an "inspired outline" for the rest of the book. In an ever-widening manner, the gospel was to go forth to the world through the Spirit-empowered witnesses of Christ.

***Slide # 20***




The direct application is to the apostles, but as we compare the great commission as given in all the gospels plus here in Acts (cf. Mt. 28:18-20, Mk. 16:15-18, Lk. 24:47-48, Jn. 20:21-22, and Acts 1:8), we find Jesus' promise to be with them to the end of the age, which would certainly have broader application than to just the apostles. So the application extends to us as well.
As has often been pointed out, the book of Acts ends abruptly, as though it really doesn't end, but rather continues on. And so it does. The story of the church continues until Christ finishes it at the RAPTURE.

A witness simply tells what he knows (Acts 4:19-20; 2 Pet. 1:16; 1 Jn. 1:1-2). Our mission is simply to testify to the truth of the gospel. Results are God's. We simply need to be His witnesses. What people do with the message is between them and God. That ultimately is not our concern. Our responsibility is to be His witnesses and leave the results to God.

Our witness ties back to "***all that Jesus began both to do and teach***" in verse 1. Jesus is now working through us as His Spirit-empowered witnesses both to do and teach. As witnesses, we are to live out our faith (do) and share our faith (teach). We are called to do BOTH!

The apostles consistently got in trouble for opening their mouths about Christ. But this is where the POWER is found. A silent witness is usually more silent than powerful. Paul asks for prayer that he might open his mouth and share the gospel as he ought to do (Col 4:3-4). Certainly we want to do so with wisdom and grace, but also with boldness. This is what we consistently see in the book of Acts. This is our calling - to be bold/wise

witnesses for Christ. And the power is on display as we live Spirit-filled lives and open our mouths to share the truth of Christ.

> In spite of great persecution, the church in China has continued to grow! They cannot pass out tracts, or they will be fined. If they continue to do so, they will be thrown in prison. When asked about this, the Chinese Christians said: “We are run by an atheistic government, so we have to accept that. But where in the Bible does it say that you have to pass out tracts? It does say we are a letter of Christ “known and read by all” (2 Cor. 3:2-3). ***So we are the tracts.”***
>
> **Acts 1:8 (NKJV)**
> **8** But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

My brothers and sisters, ***“We are the tracts” known and read by all!***

God help us to be Christ’s faithful Spirit-empowered witnesses! This is our calling – This is our mission!