

## 2009ACTS#1 INTRO--THINGS TO REMEMBER

### Acts 1:1-26

For the eleven remaining disciples,  
 A golden era had come to a crucified end.  
 During the past three-and-a-half years, Jesus,  
 had walked with them through countryside, desert, and city, getting  
 His feet as dusty and calloused as their own.  
 He had laughed with them,  
 Spoken of deep spiritual issues  
 And challenged their assumptions,  
 He opened their eyes and altered their behavior.  
 prayed with and for them  
 And suddenly he was gone.  
 Then for forty glorious days it was as if he had never left.

the Book of Acts starts with a business meeting.  
 Nothing exciting except for the ascension of Jesus Christ in chapter one,  
 Jesus spent forty days reviewing the things he wants his disciples to remember.

The question our church needs to ask in this falls kick off is  
 What does Jesus want us to remember?  
 If were going to continue to change the world?

Why are you here in worship this morning?  
 The Latin “word from which we get our word “religion”  
 has the root “lig” which scholars say means partly to “pay attention.”  
 the reason we gather for worship as Christians  
 Week after week,  
 Is to wake up.  
 to pay attention and take notice of the presence and power of God  
 in the world in everything we see, do, touch, and feel.

During the air show a week ago that when that Bomber took off and flew over my house  
 Made me sit up, run to the window and focus.  
 Because it’s very presence of power made my house shake.

The Church should make us sit up, shake our heads and focus,  
 because we are in the very presence of the living God  
 who is in our very midst alive and well.  
 Watching and listening..  
 You say:  
 Why didn’t Gospel of Acts start with the story of Pentecost?  
 The flames, Wind, and shaking, quaking, Loud Noise

Because this is his second book and  
<sup>1</sup>**In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to**  
<sup>2</sup>**teach until the day he was taken up to heaven... Acts 1:1-2a**  
 In his first book Dr. Luke wrote how Jesus worked people up  
 by his miracles and sermons and all that  
 And he now was going to wake them up again by

### 1. The first thing they would be able to do is

to discern the meaning of all the Old Testament Scriptures which referred to Christ;

**In Luke 24:45 said that *he opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures; and in John 20:22, that he breathed on them, and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost.***

### 2. the Second --This guidance by the spirit enabled them to appoint

The rites and ordinances necessary for the first Church.

The only rite and rituals the early church had were

Baptism and Communion given by Christ.

It was the work of the Holy Spirit that established,

The Creeds, Sunday school, Bible studies, church disciplines.

That is what Dr. Luke is referring to when he says:

***After that he, through the Holy Ghost, had given commandments unto the apostles. Acts 1:2b***

If there were no Acts of the Apostles,

Imagine how confused we would be if

In reading your Bible if we went from the Gospel

To the church in Rome?

We would be wondering how did the church get to Rome?

Who IS the Apostle Paul and where did he come from?

It would be like reading the Three Little Pigs story

Where one was building his house out of straw, another sticks, another bricks.

The next page has the wolf blowing at the brick house,

With all three pigs gathered inside,

We would ask: how did they get to the brick house?

Where did the wolf come from?

So the first chapter of Acts is to remind us

What Jesus wanted us to remember

as vital importance to the church.

**First of all that**

**A. JESUS IS A RISEN CHRIST**

Christ had risen from the dead

***After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. Acts 1:3***

Christ doesn't just appear as a ghost in the night,

He appeared and disappeared for some 40 days

That is more than month.

If you think that isn't very long.

Just have your relatives move in with you for 40day and 40 nights.

Forty days is time enough to know someone very well.

Jesus wanted them to get it straight,

He was resurrected from the dead.

He wanted to remove all doubt.  
 To strengthen their faith  
 He appeared to them so they could  
 touch his physical body  
 Hear him speak,  
 Watch him eat and drink and do miracles with them.  
 To prove that he was alive and the resurrection was real.

If there is anything that Christianity can offer the world  
 It is a Risen Savior.  
 We have a God who came back for us,  
 Because he cares for us.

You may say so what?  
 I can guarantee you that when you sitting beside the bedside of a dying loved one.  
 The resurrected of Christ makes all the difference in the world.  
 We do not worship a dead Mohammad,  
 We do not worship a dead Buddha  
 We do not worship a dead Confucious,  
 We do not worship a dead Mother Mary, or the Della lama.  
 WE worship a risen savior.  
 His tomb is empty.

The reason he appeared and disappeared  
 Was to prepare the church for the time when he would no longer  
 Appear physically to them and  
 They would need to trust the Holy Spirit who lived within them.

The Jews had already taken the position that Jesus body was stolen from the tomb.  
 So the believers had to refute this as eye witnesses for the nation.  
 All of Jerusalem knew that Jesus had been crucified,  
 But they did not know that he had been raised from the dead.  
 The disciples had to witness by their words, their walk and  
 their mighty works, that Jesus was alive.

**This was the “sign of Jonah” That Jesus had promise the nation. Matthew 2:38-41**

Does the way you live in your home, in your neighborhood, in your coffee circle,  
 Show your unsaved friends that Jesus is alive?

**The second thing Jesus taught was**  
**2. THE KINGDOM OF GOD HAS COME**

**He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. Acts 1:3**

The disciples had a strong political view of the kingdom,  
 They wanted a new government with Borders, a capital city,  
 an army and laws, and for God to take out the Roman rule.  
 They wanted revenge instead of forgiveness.

**“So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" Acts 1:6**

But Jesus wanted to show them a different way of living  
 One of love and not hate.

The Gospel of Acts was written to show Rome  
that Christianity was not political threat.  
And that Jesus' Kingdom was not political but spiritual,  
A Kingdom of the heart,

The Evangelical Right, and the Evangelical Left in Washington  
Would first be Patriots of the Kingdom of God,  
And Second Patriots of the United States of America,  
And if we get that confused we are lost.  
Jesus Kingdom supersedes any kingdom of this world.  
And Washington DC Republicans and Democrats would do well to  
get back to the constitution of the kingdom of God, that is the Word of God.

**The Third thing he taught was**

### **3. THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS AVAILABLE**

**On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command:**

**"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with <sup>61</sup>water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Acts 1:4-5**

**What I noticed first is that he told them this while he was eating with them.**

I am so glad that he put that in there that our resurrected bodies,  
Will still be able to eat.

I like to eat. Our lives are centered around eating.

When I get to heaven I hope to sit down with my dad and have a slice of watermelon  
And a salami sandwich.

That what we ate on the farm before bedtime.

(Maybe that is why I had so many nightmares and dreams)

He was eating with them,

And he didn't care about calorie count or cholesterol levels.

The Gospel of Luke ends with the promised gift of the Father.

**Luke 24:49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised' but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high. Luke 24:49**

**The Book of Acts Begins with the promised gift of the Father.**

**"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. Acts 1:4**

Jesus was assuring them they wouldn't be alone.

The God of our Lord Jesus Christ walks with us,

Through our pain and suffering by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**<sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8**

Acts 1:8 is a key verse of our church this year.

It explains that the power of the church

"We are His witnesses"

We used to irrigate our watermelons.

We had to carry irrigation pipes by hand.

We hooked them together with a rubber seal.

Laid them out all over the patch.

When we got the last one laid.  
 Somebody had to sit on the end.  
 Hold on to the sprinkler and put with your feet on the plug  
 Keep the pipes together until the seal would catch and hold.  
 We'd give the signal,  
 Dad would fire up the irrigation pump.  
 We didn't see the pump  
 But we could hear the pump.  
 We didn't see the water  
 But we could hear the wind blowing out of the pipes.  
 And if we were lucky the plug caught,  
 And we wouldn't get blown 5 feet out of the way.  
 The water would come out of the sprinklers giving life to the garden.

The Holy Spirit is the pump.  
 We can't see it,  
 But we can know its here  
 It explains why you and I today as Christians  
 Can make a difference in our world.  
 Because of the Holy Spirit ordinary people are able to do extraordinary things

#### **The fourth thing Jesus wanted to tell them**

#### **4. CHRISTIANS WILL SUCCEED**

**<sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."**  
**Acts 1:8**

Acts 1:8 describes the geographical spread of the Gospel.

From Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria Acts 8-9

Then to the Gentiles and the ends of the earth Acts 10-28

That means to our neighborhood here in Aberdeen, SD.

**"We are His Witnesses"**

This book begin with only 120 followers of Jesus

In a Jewish population of four million in Palestine

Christian were barely noticed.

Today there are about two billion self-identified Christian worldwide.

One-third of our world's population.

To say Jesus and his disciples haven't changed the world is an understatement.

We are called to witness Christ's love within us.

Dr. Oswald Smith said: The light that shines the farthest will shine the brightest at home.

#### **The Fifth thing Jesus wanted to share was**

#### **5. CHRIST WILL RETURN**

Something amazing happened to the disciples as they were standing with Jesus,

He physically lifted from the ground,

Was enveloped by a cloud

And disappeared.

**<sup>2</sup>After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. Acts 1:9**

Jesus wanted the disciples to see this to know that heaven

Was but a cloud length away from them,  
and that was where Jesus was.  
Someday he would come back in the same way  
That he had gone into heaven.

No wonder we look up when we talk about heaven.  
No wonder we look up when we talk about our loved ones who have died.

**Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens,  
Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. Heb 4:14**

Jesus is but a breath away, standing as our advocate before the Father.

To make certain the disciples comprehended the meaning of the event.

Two angels materialized

**<sup>10</sup>They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. Acts 1:10**

It must have been exciting enough to see Jesus just fly away, but

Suddenly two angels appeared and assured them,

**<sup>11</sup>"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:9-11**

Friend we are but a breath away from Jesus.

**For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words. I Thessalonians 4:16-18**

Acts chapter one tells us of the start of the church

And the finish of the church.

Every photographer knows the importance of having  
the camera lens in focus before triggering the shutter.

We can set the right shutter speed.

We can open the lens to its proper setting.

But if that lens is not in focus, the picture will be worthless.

The Book of Acts focuses the church on Jesus

And the work of the Holy Spirit.

I challenge you today.

Whatever your trial,

Whatever your heartache or suffering,

Whatever your sin or guilt,

Focus on Jesus and let the power of the Holy Spirit

Set you free.

And be His witness wherever you are.