

Lecture 4 – Exegesis of Acts 1

“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 (NIV)

Key Terms

Anticipation, restoration, witness, vision, mission

Objectives

- *Formulate the main message of Acts 1.
- *Write a definition of the word ‘witnessing.’
- *List the ways of witnessing that are described in Acts.

Exegesis of Acts 1

Lead Question: What have you gathered from Acts concerning missions and the work of the Holy Spirit?

I. Acts 1:8

“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.”

- A. Instruction of Jesus for disciples
- B. Signpost and signal for rest of book of Acts
- C. Leads disciples to anticipate God’s intervention

II. Acts 1:1

- A. Acts is the second volume, second part of the Gospel
- B. Literary and thematic connections to Luke’s Gospel
- C. Two interpretations of ‘all that Jesus set out to do and to teach’

III. Acts 1:3

- A. Theme ‘kingdom of God’ continued here
- B. Above all else: Rule of God, not so much Realm of God
 - 1. Both individually and corporately

IV. Acts 1:4

- A. Gift: Receiving the Holy Spirit
- B. Jerusalem
 - 1. Place at which God revealed Himself throughout the ages
 - 2. Place from which Holy Spirit will be poured out

V. Acts 1:6-7

- A. Question of the disciples is very telling
- B. Israel was symbol of God’s _____.
- C. Disciples still insist on restoration for Israel now
- D. Jesus does not reject their hope (v. 7, 8)
- E. Two wave event
 - 1. Yes, God is showing faithfulness to Israel
 - 2. But, behind that is a major tidal wave, namely to _____.
- F. Restoration theme picked up in chapter 3
 - 1. Acts 3:21 ff. “He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as He promised long ago through His holy prophets.”
 - a. Larger wave: God gathers Jews and Gentiles as His covenant people and thereby fulfills and restores everything that has been promised in the OT.
 - b. Priority of preaching: Jews first, then Gentiles

c. One way for Jew and Gentile alike for salvation (Acts 2:21; Acts 4:12)

VI. Acts 1:8

A. Power

1. Strength
2. Ability to create
3. Refers to the Spirit (see Micah 3:8)

B. Power is something that is being received

1. A divine enabling

C. Explains 1:5

1. Jesus leads His people into the outpouring of the Spirit and beyond.

D. "My witness": Possessive aspect

1. Protected by me
2. Associated with me
3. On my terms

E. In Greek: martyr

1. Still an offensive message for some, a deep wisdom for others; for those who believe it is the demonstration of God's strength and wisdom.

F. Opposition and treasure theme

G. To witness is to give testimony to the fact that there is one who solved the problem between the great _____ of man and the great _____ of man; who is able to restore man to his glory by restoring him to a _____ with God, to atone for his debt and to enable that person to grow in _____.

H. Apostolic witnesses: Primarily those with whom Jesus worked

I. Other witnesses: Not inferior but apostles are unique

J. Situation in which Jesus says these words

1. Jesus stands on mount of Olives; they look over the territory that is going to be covered.
2. God is in charge.
3. God has His agenda, on His terms.
4. God is going to work things out.

VII. Acts 1:9

A. Cloud: moving from visible to invisible world

VIII. Acts 1:11

A. Important statement referring to second coming of Christ

B. Jesus is going to return in the same way that He left

IX. Excursus: Missiological Approach

Various ways that this witness is carried out:

A. Public speeches

1. Sermons, adjusted to the particular audience
 - a. Jewish people: _____
 - b. Gentiles: _____
2. Dialogue or debate
 - a. Acts 19:9 ff.: Paul in the lecture hall of Tyrannus
 - b. Acts 24:12
3. Witness in the public domain
 - a. Acts 26
 - b. Personal testimonies

B. Witness in the household domain

1. Household: 10-20 people, small community
2. Examples
 - a. Mary, mother of John Mark

- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

3. Used for:

- a. Prayer circles
- b. Fellowship
- c. Prayer
- d. Worship
- e. Teaching
- f. Evangelistic get-togethers

C. Personal evangelizing

- 1. Acts 8: Philip and the Ethiopian
- 2. Acts 9: Ananias and Saul

D. The literary form of presenting the Gospel

X. Missionary Strategy

A. Paul's strategy:

- 1. He uses what is at hand for the sake of the Gospel and is dependent upon God.

When you go somewhere, understand the people, understand what motivates them, where they are at. Translate and indigenize forms of evangelism.