

# YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES

Lesson 1





**"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8, NRSV)**



The first chapter of Acts recounts the last days of Jesus on Earth and the first reactions of the disciples after His Ascension.

The last words of Jesus became the disciples' mission. We have the same mission as the Church in the 21st Century.



**Acts 1:1-5**

- Luke the beloved doctor



**Acts 1:6-7**

- Wrong expectations



**Acts 1:8**

- The disciples' mission



**Acts 1:9-11**

- Jesus' Second Coming



**Acts 1:12-14**

- United in prayer



**Acts 1:15-26**

- The successor of Judas

# LUKE THE BELOVED DOCTOR

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

The Acts of the Apostles is the second book of the Gospel according to Luke, the beloved doctor (Luke 1:1-4; Colossians 4:14)

The introduction of Acts explains that Jesus stayed with His disciples for 40 days before His Ascension (10 days before Pentecost)



The book covers the history of the Church between the years 31 to 62. That is, from Jesus' Ascension to just prior to the first judgment of Paul by Nero.





# WRONG EXPECTATIONS

“Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’” (Acts 1:6)



There are prophecies in the Old Testament about both the victorious Messiah and the suffering Messiah.



The disciples and the Jews in that time only expected a Messiah that would be victorious over the Romans.

After Jesus’ resurrection, they understood that the Messiah had to suffer before being glorified (Luke 24:45-46). However, their question shows that they hadn’t understood the work of Jesus to its full extent.

Jesus told them that they shouldn’t try to understand the things for which they were yet unprepared (Acts 1:7)



# THE DISCIPLES' MISSION

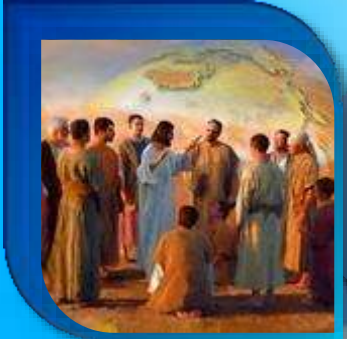
“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

This mission statement has four main points:



**The Holy Spirit.** It was prophesied (Isaiah 44:3; Joel 2:28-29) that the Holy Spirit would descend with special power to do the work that people couldn't do on their own.

**The testimony.** The disciples were commissioned to be witnesses of the work and power of Jesus.



**The mission plan.** Their mission would begin in Jerusalem and then it would spread to the ends of the world.

**The mission goal.** They had to carry the message to the people wherever they were, and not to wait for the people to come to them.





# JESUS' SECOND COMING

**“Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.” (Acts 1:9)**

Luke gives more detail in Acts on the Ascension of Jesus than he mentioned in Luke 24:51.

He explains in both passages that Jesus didn't ascend by himself. He “was taken up” or “was parted from them”. He was taken up by God to be exalted (Acts 2:33)

Two angels were commissioned to encourage the astonished disciples and to bring hope to all the believers.



**The disciples saw Jesus ascending to heaven, and our eyes will see Jesus coming again.**



# UNITED IN PRAYER

**"Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile." (Acts 1:12 NLT)**



**The upper room became the home of the 11 apostles and the women who had been following Jesus during His ministry on Earth. The family of Jesus was with them—His mother and brothers.**

**The brothers of Jesus were skeptic a few years before (John 7:5), so something had changed in their lives.**



**The 120 members of the very early Church took time to confess their sins and to repent. They were united in purpose thanks to intense prayer. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the answer to their prayers.**



# THE SUCCESSOR OF JUDAS

“And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.” (Acts 1:26)



**Casting their lots doesn't mean that they took a random decision. They chose acceptable candidates beforehand. They faithfully prayed, believing that God would lead that choice (Proverbs 16:33)**

**There are some other apostles mentioned in Acts besides Matthias; for example, Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:14)**

**There were two requirements to become the 12th apostle:**

- 1. To have been with Jesus from His baptism to His ascension.**
- 2. To be willing to be a witness of His resurrection.**



**“In obedience to the word of their Master the disciples assembled in Jerusalem to wait for the fulfillment of God’s promise. Here they spent ten days, days of deep heart searching. They put away all differences and drew close together in Christian fellowship...**

**The commission given to the disciples is given also to us. Today, as then, a crucified and risen Saviour is to be uplifted before those who are without God and without hope in the world...**

**[...] All who are ordained unto the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. The same longing of soul that He felt for the saving of the lost is to be manifest in them. Not all can fill the same place, but for all there is a place and a work. All upon whom God’s blessings have been bestowed are to respond by actual service; every gift is to be employed for the advancement of His kingdom.”**



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