

I Need You and Need to be Your Witness Acts 1:1-26

I. Icebreaker: Given a chance whose biography would you like to write? Why?

II. Introduction:

The book of Luke follows the life of Jesus Christ and this book of Acts is an account of the Apostles and disciples as witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ. This book will challenge us to be fully devoted in our heart, sold out in our actions, counting the cost of following Jesus. It is all about being witnesses for Christ.

WITNESS: One who tells what he or she has seen or personally experienced, often in a court of law. The term may also refer to the testimony the person has given. (Tyndale Bible Dictionary 2001)

In chapter 1 there are about 120-150 people who follow Jesus, but by the end of chapter 3 there were 3,000 to 5,000, then tens of thousands to currently a billion Christians worldwide. Acts means the actions of the Apostles and disciples.

Read Acts 1:1-5 *In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach ²until the day He was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the Apostles He had chosen. ³After His suffering, He presented Himself to them 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. ⁴On 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. **5** For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”*

1. While Jesus was with His followers after the resurrection, what did Jesus make sure that they understood? (1:3)
2. What did Jesus want them to do and why? (1:4-5)
3. What was this baptism to which Jesus was referring? Why was it so important? (1:5, John 16:13-14)

III. God, I need You, and I need to follow You. It's both!

This is the tension of the disciple (learner): our desperate need for God and our devoted following of God. He must become greater and I must become less. He is greater than I.

Read Acts 1:6-7 *Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” **7** He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.*

4. What is the kingdom they thought Jesus was going to restore? What was Jesus's response to their question? Why do you think he answered in the way he did?
5. What is the kingdom that Jesus announced in 1:3? (Matthew 28:18, 4:17, 23)
6. Why should we ask about restoring the kingdom? How are we involved in this restoration?

IV. “You will be my witnesses.”

God calls us to become a disciple; and a disciple (according to Jesus) always becomes his witness.

Read Acts 1:8-11 *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.” 9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 “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.”*

7. We are called to be His witnesses. How can we be a witness for Jesus when we haven’t seen Him physically? Why is it easy to be His witness when we know Jesus personally? How do we get to know Christ personally?

8. In Acts 21:37 to 22:10 how did Paul bear witness for Jesus before a hostile crowd?

9. What event is the two men in white speaking about when saying, “*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.*”? Why was the departure and return of Jesus important to us in light of being His witnesses? (1:8, John 14:3)

10. In what ways can we be witnesses?

V. Be fueled by the Holy Spirit.

We were created to be fueled by the Holy Spirit. Your soul will respond to the Spirit of God. Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit to help us understand the Scriptures and how it applies to our life and circumstances. The Holy Spirit makes His home in us to strengthen us, guide us through the Scriptures and bring peace and wisdom and direction and purpose in our life.

11. How can we be fueled by the Holy Spirit? (Acts 1:8, Ephesians 5:13, Ephesians 4:30, Galatians 5:18, 22, 23, I Thessalonians 5:19)

12. When we are fueled by the Spirit, God gives us the fruit of the Spirit. How have you seen the fruit of the Spirit making you a better witness for Christ? (Galatians 5:22, 23)

VI. Gather/Join together in prayer.

The great challenge of modern believers is to gather together and pray. When Christians really believe they gather, when they doubt and fear, they scatter.

Read Acts 1:12-14 *12Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. 13When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*

13. What are the differences between to “pray by yourself” and “gather to pray?”

14. Where are your opportunities and commitment to gather to pray?

VII. Apostles and Disciples

There were only 13, 12 Apostles, minus Judas, replaced through prayer by Mattias plus Paul called directly by Jesus on the road to Damascus. *To be an Apostle you had to be an eyewitness to the life of Jesus.* They were authorized to launch the early church. But everyone else is called a disciple.

Read Acts 1:15-26 *15In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group*

numbering about a hundred and twenty) [16](#)and said, “Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. [17](#)He was one of our number and shared in our ministry. [18](#)(With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. [19](#)Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) [20](#)“For,” said Peter, “it is written in the Book of Psalms: “ ‘May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,’ and, “ ‘May another take his place of leadership.’[21](#)Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, [22](#)beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.” [23](#)So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. [24](#)Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen [25](#)to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” [26](#)Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

15. What did replacing Judas accomplish?

16. As you are asked to be trained as a disciple for His witness, what is your next step?

Opportunity is now to take steps to become a disciple of Jesus Christ for His witness.