



Acts Awakenings

Message Notes, August 13, 2017

Acts 1

Now that our “Retro Faith” series is completed, we return to our “Awaken” theme. Over the next few months, we will be walking through the Book of Acts to celebrate the many *awakening* moves of the Holy Spirit in and through the followers of Jesus, continuing His mission on earth. I remind us that God has called US to seek Him for an awakening in our individual lives, in our church, and in our city. Throughout this year - from the pulpit, in our first 2 “*Call to Awakening*” weeks, and in our daily prayer gatherings, we have been crying out to the Lord **for . . .**

- * A more passionate LOVE for Jesus
- * A deeper SURRENDER to follow Him as Lord
- * A greater YEARNING for holiness
- * A bolder FAITH in His power
- * A deeper BURDEN for the lost (missional initiative)
- * A more radical LOVE for each other (and unity)

The Book of Acts reveals the actual fruits of Holy Spirit awakening, BUT it is not an disconnected, idealistic story. These were real people, with real problems and flaws, and it often got messy. Still, the Holy Spirit moved among them with power and transformation as they surrendered and followed Jesus. When God’s people are hungry for a move of God, things happen!

Key Insights from the Book of Acts:

1. The Book of Acts is a continuation of the ministry of Jesus (Acts 1:1-3)

When Jesus said on the cross “It is finished”, he only meant that His work of redeeming us from sin was finished, NOT that the work of the Kingdom was finished. Jesus *ushered in* the Kingdom, and then He gave to His followers the mission to carry it forth in the world. Jesus continues to minister in the world – FROM heaven, BY the Holy Spirit, THROUGH His people (the church).

2. The central role of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4)

Jesus had told his disciples that they would continue to do the things HE had done, and “even greater” because He would send Holy Spirit “to be with you forever . . . for he lives with you and will be in you.” (John 14:12-17)

The Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), when the Holy Spirit is poured out on the followers of Jesus, is a fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy that “I will pour out my Spirit on ALL people – sons, daughters, old, young.” (Joel 2:28-29)

The Holy Spirit would now operate in and through *every* follower of Jesus, not just selected leaders for specific purposes. And Jesus would no longer be limited to a single physical body, he would now work (by His Spirit) everywhere His followers would go. The **multitudes** of the people of God were now His hands and feet!

* Acts 1:4 reveals that Jesus told his disciples to “**wait**” (**and pray**) for the “gift of the Holy Spirit”. It’s not that their waiting and praying were going to make it happen. God was sovereignly committed to this purpose, but *their* waiting and praying allowed *them* to be a part of what God was doing. They had the blessing of being the vessels for His purpose!



3. They had a clearly defined mission. (Acts 1:8)

Jesus was clear – you are being empowered SO THAT you will be my witnesses in the world (and thereby expand my kingdom).

Acts 1:6 reveals that the disciples were eager to know WHEN Jesus was going to “restore the kingdom” (they still had a worldly, nationalistic view of Jesus restoring Israel). Jesus’ response was basically – “You don’t need to know when Father will wrap it all up. I am at work NOW. I am bringing the kingdom NOW. I want you to join with me NOW.

May we hear this invitation – to cry for awakening, yield to Holy Spirit, and join Jesus in what He is doing in our world NOW.