



Title: The Plan and Power of God

Text: Acts 1:1–11

CONTEXT |

This week we begin a series that will last several months covering Acts 1–7. Acts is the second book written by Luke, following his gospel, where he details how Jesus continued to work after his death and resurrection through the church. In the first seven chapters the church is established in Jerusalem, before it spreads to Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth (1:8). In this introduction to the historical account of the early church we see some important instruction for the leaders of the church, an overview of God’s plan, and a great promise. In these verses the resurrected Jesus shares his final instruction for the church before his ascension to Heaven.

MAIN IDEA |

Jesus’ powerful ministry continues through His Spirit-empowered church.

KEY VERSES |

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 1:8 ESV

DISCUSSION QUESTION IDEAS |

- What from this passage encourages you the most?
- What from this passage challenges you the most?
- What are some things that distract the church from its mission today?
- How should the ascension of Jesus and his promised return affect our daily lives?
- (Read Romans 8:9) Since the Spirit has already come to believers, unlike those in Acts 1, is there any proper application of Jesus instruction that he gave to his first disciples?
- Describe the evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in a believer’s life.
- Can you share a testimony of a time when you know God’s Spirit empowered your witness?

EXPLANATION |

While the church must engage its own culture, it must always remain faithful to God’s design for his people. Luke has given us this record of how the church was established to show us that Jesus continues his work through the church even though He’s in heaven. Now, nearly 2000 years later, this historical account serves as powerful tool to critique our methods and our focus.

The disciples have been well taught and trained by Jesus. Their discouragement upon his death has given way to excitement as they had the chance to interact with their now resurrected Lord. Yet, he says they still are not ready to accomplish his mission of bringing the gospel to the lost people around them and to the ends of the earth. He tells them to wait until they receive the Spirit. The Spirit who empowered Jesus will empower their ministry. After this final instruction to wait Jesus was taken up in the clouds and the disciples were told he would one day return in the same fashion.