Acts 1:4-8

“Christ’s Farewell Address!”

1. Intro:
   1.1. Communion: During worship. Romulo will lead.
   1.2. Pollsters report that 72% of Americans don’t know their next-door neighbors!!!
   1.3. Some scholars estimate that over the 30 year span of the book of Acts, the Christian church grew from 120 to 100,000 among Jews alone. [obv greater w/Gentiles]
      1.3.1. Therefore if taken only as a “church growth study”, Acts would qualify as a valuable source for discovering principles & procedures for spreading the gospel.

2. CHRIST’S FAREWELL ADDRESS! (4-8)
   2.1. WAIT...UNTIL! (4,5)
   2.2. Wait – Also see Lk.24:49.
      2.2.1. This waiting/tarrying lasted a whole 10 days, no longer.
   2.3. In Christian service there is a delicate balance between spending time w/the Father (in worship, praise, & intimacy), & in obeying the Fathers commands in ministry outreach.
      2.3.1. Waiting in the upper room, where they spent a good part of 10 days, must have been a sweet time of “peace, quiet, prayer, fellowship, & thanking Jesus for all He meant to them”.
      2.3.2. Times such as these, in warm fellowship w/other believers in the presence of God, are precious!
      2.3.3. But then suddenly the “until” hits!
   2.4. Until – The until takes effect & they receive the power they’d been waiting for.
      2.4.1. From then on it was “lights, camera, action.”
      2.4.2. It was time for ministry & practical application of the power they’d receive.
      2.4.3. Within 24 hours, they had produced 3,000 unpolished disciples, who needed care & nurture in their Christian faith.
         2.4.3.1. And the action sparked that day, lasted the 30 year span of the book of Acts!

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1 Bill McKibben, in the Age of Missing Information, Signs of the Times, February, 1994
2 Acts of the Holy Spirit; Peter Wagner; pg.16.
2.5. “We must not allow the time spent in preministry spiritual formation to extend indefinitely.”

2.5.1. Allow me to add a PS here: I said earlier, “In Christian service there is a delicate balance between spending time w/the Father (in worship, praise, & intimacy), & in obeying the Fathers commands in ministry outreach.” - We must always maintain that balance!!!

2.5.2. What I’m saying is, “don’t become a professional “tarrier”!”

2.5.3. If we don’t have the intimacy we won’t have the power!

2.5.3.1. It’s as necessary as food is to the human body.

2.5.3.2. But food, like tarrying, can be overdone.

2.5.4. We must arise from our upper room & head into the marketplace of Murrieta & over to the shops of Mongolia!

2.6. (5) Baptized with the Holy Spirit – Unfortunately differences of understanding about what is meant by the baptism of the H.S. have been used by the enemy to separate segments of the body of Christ for almost 100 years.

2.6.1. Sincere believers on all sides are seeking the same thing, namely, the unobstructed power of the H.S. in their lives & ministries.

2.7. There are 3 separate terms used for the power-bestowing event Luke’s talking about

2.7.1. Baptized w/the H.S. – used only 1 more time in Acts (11:16).

2.7.1.1. When Peter explains what happened in the house of Cornelius (See 11:15,16; also 10:44-46).

2.7.2. The H.S. has come upon you – (epi)

2.7.3. Filled w/the H.S. – we have repetitive times individuals are filled with the Spirit.

2.7.4. There are many discussions, disagreements, & arguments on how many times one can be baptized or filled w/the Spirit; Whether it occurs at salvation, or is subsequent to conversion; Whether there is initial physical evidence to certify that it happened, or not is more important to some than others.

2.7.5. I think we can all agree on this: “We need to receive the supernatural power of the H.S. in our lives & our ministries to the greatest extent possible in order to serve God well in our world.” (Peter Wagner)

2.8. He has provided us with a power for our daily living.

2.8.1. It’s the difference between running an automobile w/o oil & with oil.

2.8.2. You can’t run it w/o gas, the car would stop.

2.8.3. But try running it w/o oil. It will run for a little while, but the repair bill is always costly. So it is w/the Christian life!

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3 Ibid; pg.53
2.9. A good example was at a Coffee Shop yesterday in Blythe:
2.9.1. Our waitress kept filling up or warming up our coffee.
2.9.2. But as she did it, she would always spill it over the top & into the saucer
2.9.3. Good picture of the H.S. wanting to re-fill & overflow each of our lives!

2.10. **AT THIS TIME?** *(6,7)*

2.11. The times & seasons/dates of such things were matters within **God’s own purposes & authority.**
2.11.1. Instead He directed the disciples toward **their task** which was to be **His witnesses.**

2.12. *(7) Deut 29:29* “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

2.13. Also note, **Israel** - Some believe God is completely done with Israel & the church has become the fulfillment of all future prophecies.
2.13.1. If this was so, why wouldn’t Jesus have said, “Haven’t you understood yet? There isn’t going to be any kingdom.”

2.14. **POWER & WITNESS!** *(8)*

2.15. Jesus’ last words – yet not as a dying man, but as the Lord of Glory!
2.15.1. He taught them in Jn.14-16 that He was going back to heaven to represent us, & that we were to be here on earth representing Him.
2.15.1.1. He would be in heaven as our ambassador, & We would be here on earth as His ambassadors.

2.16.1. Ex.31:1-11 God filled individuals with the Spirit of God to do sewing & embroidering & dress-making! *(vs.10, for Aaron & the priests)*
2.16.1.1. And in all manner of workmanship *(3,5).*
2.16.2. It’s for the **laborer** who does his job everyday in his own strength, or asks, “Lord, help me to work that I can reveal You in my hard labor.”
2.16.3. It’s for the **salesman** who does his job everyday in his own crafty way, or asks, “Lord God, I don’t want to lie about my product. I’ll say things exactly as they are & not oversell it.”
2.16.4. If you think you’re **full,** He will leave you empty.
   If you admit you’re **empty,** He will fill you up with all strength & power & might…for the **Christian life!**

2.17. **Witnesses –**

2.18. **Explain E1-E2-E3:** [E-stand for evangelism; the # represents the # of barriers that must be crossed in order to do it]
2.18.1. **E1** – Monocultural evangelism. The only barrier is to move outside the church (also called the *stained-glass barrier*).

2.18.1.1. Too many Christians fail to cross it.

2.18.1.2. You don’t have to learn a new language; don’t have to eat different foods; don’t have to adapt to new behavior patterns.

2.18.1.3. Just have to communicate the good news to people very much like themselves.

2.18.2. **E2 & E3** – Both of these are Cross-cultural, the difference is one of degree.

2.18.2.1. **E2** – example would be Anglo-Americans evangelizing Mexican-Americans because the cultures have comparatively minor differences.

2.18.2.2. **E3** - example would be the Indians Nate & Aide minister to down in Oaxaca.

2.18.3. Most people are won to Christ through E1 evangelism. It has always been this way & always will be. It is the easiest, most natural, & most effective kind of evangelism.

2.18.3.1. Jesus was a monocultural evangelist [1st 120 saved were Jews]

2.18.3.2. That’s why Mike & Lori Ramsey went to the P.I. – They made disciples, raised up nationals, then turned the church over to Pastor Mark there in Iloilo.

2.19. Jesus promised them power for this *world-sized task*!

2.19.1. This is the 5th appearance of Jesus’ Great commission.

2.19.2. Mt – Make disciples of all nations. (28:19)

2.19.3. Mark – Preach the gospel to every creature. (16:15)

2.19.4. Luke – Repentance & remission of sins should be preached in his name to all nations. (24:47)

2.19.5. John – As the Father sent me, I also send you. (20:21)

2.19.5.1. 4 of the 5 (John the exception) specify the international, global scope of the evangelistic task mandated by Jesus.

2.19.6. On another occasion Jesus said, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

2.19.6.1. This seems to indicate that world evangelism is not an endless task, but that it is on a divine time line.

2.19.7. The specific goal is to plant the outposts of the kingdom of God, which are principally Christian churches, in every nation, ethnos, or people groups.

2.19.7.1. It’s making sustainable national churches around the world.4

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4 Part of CCM’s “Vision Statement”.
“Some missiologists are suggesting for the 1st time in Christian history that there is light at the end of the Great Commission tunnel.”

The body of Christ has human resources, material resources, & the spiritual resources to complete the task.

Of course no human plan or strategy could possibly accomplish the task. It can only be done w/the extraordinary outpouring of supernatural power through the H.S.

The most challenging task that lies ahead of us is the 10/40 window. (Show Map)

It was Christian mission’s strategist Luis Bush who started calling this rectangular area "the 10/40 window".

He used that easy-to-remember name because it lies across Africa and Asia from 10-40 degrees latitude north of the equator.

Missions statistics of the 10/40 Window:

Center of population: 2/3rd of the world's population, more than 3.2 billion people, live in the 10/40 Window.

Unreached and unevangelized: 95% of the people living in the 10/40 Window are unevangelized. Many have never heard the Gospel message even once.

Good news: There's a difference between unreached and unreachable. In 1989 there were only 4 known Christians living in Mongolia. That country now has an estimated 10,000 indigenous believers.

Christian TV: Can now be received in many closed 10/40 Window nations.

Poverty: 85% of those living in the 10/40 window are the poorest of the world's poor.

Least evangelized cities: 1/2 of the world's least evangelized cities are in this window.

People ask, “Isn’t my neighbor next door just as important?”

The answer is, of course it is important to share the gospel with all!

But why we emphasize this 10/40 window is in regards to “access” or lack of access to the gospel, a viable church, or even the Scriptures.

Think about it, if the Iron Curtain came down, w/such little previous warning, a series of similar events over the next few years could radically change the political landscape of the world, & topple some of the most formidable traditional barriers to the gospel. (Peter Wagner)

What can we do?

Well we can be praying for this very thing!

Acts of the Holy Spirit; Peter Wagner; pg.56.
2.23.3. **Praying for this very region.** For cross-cultural missionaries to **go** into this region; **Finances** to be designated there; get **Translations** underway.

2.24. “**God’s power,** is available to **God’s people,** who want to do **God’s will,** and be **God’s witnesses!**”

2.25. Jerusalem, Judea & Samaria, & to the end of the earth –

2.25.1. “**Maybe the ends of the earth** imply those who have gone the farthest away from Christ?” (Spurgeon)

2.26. To be His **witnesses** in both **word** and **deed** means **communicating the verbal content of the Gospel** and **living God’s way** and not our own.

2.26.1. This is the **central task** of the people of God, but it can be only accomplished with **power** from the Spirit.

2.27. Think of the most beautiful **mailbox** you’ve ever seen, maybe in a wealthy neighborhood. Now think of the oldest, weather-beaten one off an old dirt road.

2.27.1. The mailbox is important **not because** of what it is in itself, **but because** it belongs to, & is part of, **something greater than itself.**

2.27.2. Both boxes can be equally trusted with a precious letter.

2.27.3. But a mailbox “**disconnected from it system**” would be **useless.**

2.27.3.1. It would neither receive nor transmit that stream of human communication for which it is made.

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6 Warren Wiersbe; With The Word; pg.706.
7 Thought taken from, The Best of Vance Havner; pg.32,33.