

Witnesses to the Ends of the World

Acts 1:1 – 2:47 (1:8)

“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.”

Praise and thanks be to God for leading us to this historic Global Leadership Empowerment Forum 2025 and for equipping us spiritually with the power of the Holy Spirit so that we may be the witnesses of Christ Jesus to the ends of the earth.

The Book of Acts follows on directly from the Gospel of Luke. The book of Acts is about how the gospel of Jesus Christ spread all over the world under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Above all, it shows us on how God's counsel of world mission is continued and fulfilled through the witnesses of Christ, namely his disciples.

Why are we studying the book of Acts? We study it because we have accepted God's promise from Nehemiah 2:17 and Ezekiel 37:10 as God's counsel. Our vision is to form 10,000 1:1 Biblestudy-Teams and to spiritually revive this continent, Europe, by pioneering all 1,700 universities and colleges. Our vision is the world mission. Therefore, our important prayer topic for studying the book of Acts is that we may be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and be witnesses of Christ Jesus to the ends of the earth. Furthermore, let us learn about the faith of the first Christians, their missionary spirit, their vision and their common life, that we may form the influential church of Jesus Christ and be used as a spiritual headquarter for world mission.

Part One: Jesus' counsel on world mission through his disciples (1:1-26)

Let's read Acts 1:1 together: “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach.” With the “former Book”, Luke refers to his first book, the Gospel of Luke, where we learn about Jesus' public ministry, how he healed various ill people, raised the dead and appointed his disciples as shepherds. Above all, we learn how lovingly Jesus served the crowds as Christ and Lord, bore the sins of all people like a lamb led to the slaughter, and fulfilled God's wonderful work of redemption through his sacrificial death on the cross. Isaiah praised this Jesus Christ by glorifying him: “Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.” (Is 53:4) However, Jesus did not remain under the power of death for long, but rose from the dead on the third day and appeared to his disciples for 40 days. Paul testified this in his letter to the saints in Corinth: “For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.” (1 Cor 15:3-5).

Now Luke's “second book”, the Book of Acts, continues seamlessly at this point. Let's read verse 3: “After 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.” Verse 3 tells us what the resurrected Jesus

did after his resurrection. Jesus spoke with his disciples about the kingdom of God through intensive Bible study. All the kingdoms of this world are withering and falling like grass and like the flowers of the field. They have all passed away and will pass away. But God's kingdom will last forever (1 Peter 1:24-25)! The risen Lord, Jesus Christ, who defeated the power of death once and for all, now prayed for his disciples that they might place their hope in the kingdom of God alone, that they alone might seek and inherit his kingdom that can never perish, spoil or fade (1 Peter 1:3-4).

What did Jesus admonish his disciples to do? Let us read verse 4: “On 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.” For them, Jerusalem was the place full of pain, defeat and grief, where their beloved Lord Jesus Christ was disgracefully crucified. Jerusalem was the place where, in fear and panic, they denied and betrayed their beloved Lord and ran away in fear. Jerusalem was the very place they wanted to leave and forget as quickly as possible. But Jesus admonished and encouraged them not to leave Jerusalem. Jesus exhorted them to wait for the promise and to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. He gave them confidence that the promise of God would be fulfilled not long after those days. Jesus even encouraged them, right where they had completely failed, to start anew and write the glorious history of faith.

However, the disciples were not yet very interested in the eternal kingdom of God, but were very fixated on the present earthly kingdom for Israel: “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” (1:6) They were very fixated on their own future in this world. Jesus understood their grief and their expectation. But what a surprise this is! Regardless of their grief, Jesus appointed his disciples for world mission by renewing his promise for them. Let us read verses 7 and 8 together: “He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 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.”

What promise and what mission did the risen Lord entrust to his disciples?

Firstly, they will receive the power of the Holy Spirit. The disciples should not serve God's ministry with their own strength and human calculation. No, they should wait with unconditional trust for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit with the power of God. The Holy Spirit is the power of the Almighty God, who frees people from the power of sin and gives them a new life. When apostle Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, preached to his crowd: “This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.” (2:23), “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” (2:36) and “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.” (2:38) 3,000 of them came to repentance that day and were baptized. When Peter said to a well-known lame

beggar: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." this lame beggar was freed from his chronic illness. The Holy Spirit is the healing power of the almighty Creator God, who frees people from all their sin of unbelief and gives them complete healing and new life.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and also the true Comforter: "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever." (John 14:16). With this power of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were able to overcome all kinds of afflictions and persecutions, even martyrdom, and serve God's missionary work. The Holy Spirit would guide them with the truth of God's word and true comfort, so that they could stand unshakably on the grace and truth of God and be empowered to freely proclaim the word of God and the saving gospel of Jesus with all authority.

Secondly, they will be Jesus' witnesses to the ends of the earth. Jesus promised the apostles that they will be Jesus' witnesses. The apostles were eyewitnesses of Jesus. They had seen Jesus' ministry, how he served all kinds of sinful people. Above all, they had seen how faithfully Jesus, in complete humiliation, fulfilled the counsel of God for the redemption of mankind, even to the point of death on the cross. Although his disciples often followed Jesus without insight and only with earthly hope, they would be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit into courageous witnesses of the gospel. They would be influential witnesses through the power of the Holy Spirit; in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. In those days, being an eyewitness to Jesus meant martyrdom. But Jesus believed that his disciples, filled with the Holy Spirit, would stand firm in witnessing to Jesus' name with the firmest determination, even to the point of martyrdom.

After Jesus said this, he was taken up to heaven. As the disciples were still gazing dreamily after Jesus, two angels came to them and said that they should not mourn after Jesus. Jesus will come again! Now the disciples were allowed to actively do God's work and fulfill the mission that Jesus had just given them.

How did the disciples obey Jesus' words? Let's look at verse 12: "Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city." For the apostles, the temptation was great to return to their home in Galilee and never return to Jerusalem, the city of their disappointment, pain and defeat. But when they were strengthened by Jesus' promise, they decided to stay in Jerusalem. They returned to Jerusalem confidently through the obedience of faith.

What did the disciples do in Jerusalem? Let's read verse 14: "All these were always together with one accord in prayer, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers." How could they constantly join together and gather for one-hearted prayer? Were they similar to each other? Or was there no other choice? No! They had absolute trust in Jesus' word of promise. Because they had absolute confidence that Jesus would continue his work of salvation through them; because they had absolute confidence that he would use them as witnesses to the ends of the earth.

Their unanimous vessel of prayer is the expression of their faith in Jesus' promise for them. Always being together is also an expression of their faith in concretely asking God for the power of the Holy Spirit. They believed that the Holy Spirit would enable them to be witnesses of Jesus, whatever the cost. Their unanimous vessel of prayer enabled them to overcome their pain, defeat and grief, and made them spiritually stronger and stronger, so that they were transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit into living witnesses of Jesus, whom God could use in a very precious way.

But there was an unresolved problem: there was no 12th apostle. Although Judas had received the apostleship like the other 11 disciples, he became a traitor to Jesus. Through Judas' betrayal, the vessel of cooperation was completely broken. Because the healthy body of Christ Jesus was wounded by Judas' betrayal, it was not easy for the disciples to join constantly in unanimous prayer. How was this fatal issue for receiving the Holy Spirit resolved? Now Peter stood up as the responsible spiritual leader and treated this deep wound of unbelief based on the Word of God. Psalm 69:26 gave Peter the direction to choose the twelfth apostle. They all came to God in prayer. The lot fell on Matthias (1:24, 25). Matthias became the 12th apostle. Thus the vessel of prayer and the healthy body of Christ Jesus were restored so that they could now have a healthy and living fellowship of word and prayer and receive the power of the Holy Spirit.

But Jesus' ascension to heaven was not the end of Jesus' ministry. Jesus gave his disciples, and us too, his great promise that we would receive the power of the Holy Spirit and fulfill his mission to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. According to his promise, God has indeed changed Jesus' weak disciples, who had recently denied and betrayed him out of fear and cowardice, into the courageous witnesses of Jesus. If God used such weak disciples of Jesus so influentially for his work of salvation, why could he not fulfill his counsel for the world mission through you and me, indeed through each of us? Let us also grasp God's promise from Acts 1:8 and form the unanimous prayer vessel with Ezek 37:10 and receive the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us always be together and daily united in prayer with all men and women of faith that we may receive the power of the Holy Spirit. May God use each one of you as a witness of Christ Jesus to the ends of the earth, starting from every faculty of the University of Bonn, 1700 universities in Europe. May God empower you to form 10,000 one-to-one Biblestudyteams on campus in this year.

Part 2: The miracle of Pentecost and Peter's Sermon at Pentecost (2:1-47)

Verse 2:1 says: "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place." The Day of Pentecost is also called the Feast of Weeks because it takes place 7 weeks after the Feast of Firstfruits. Together with the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles, it was one of the three main festivals of the Jews. This is why Jews from all over the world came to Jerusalem to celebrate this festival. The 12 apostles, the women and the brothers of Jesus, all the remnant formed a unanimous vessel of prayer with all their hearts by joining together in one place on the day of Pentecost.

What happened? Let us read verses 2:2-4: "Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." As Jesus had promised his disciples, the Holy Spirit came down from heaven and filled the whole house. He came to rest on each of them, and they began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them.

What can we learn here about the power and work of the Holy Spirit?

Firstly, the Holy Spirit allows his disciples to overcome all language barriers and makes them able to communicate. Until now, the disciples themselves had not been able to imagine suddenly speaking to other people in their own languages. Most of them did not even know high Hebrew. Everyone recognized from their accent that they originally came from Galilee (2:7). But the Holy Spirit worked exactly this miracle in them. These people were Parthians, Medes, Elamites by origin, living in Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt and the region of Cyrene in Libya. The countries and regions from which the Jews came together for the Day of Pentecost represented the whole world at that time. Everyone heard the apostles speak of the great deeds of God in their own language, so that they were astonished. Thanks and praise be to God that he made us able to communicate through the power of the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit, communication between people through all these different languages was no obstacle! On that day, people from all nations heard this powerful testimony of Jesus Christ in their own language. It was the power and work of the Holy Spirit. And so the gospel of Jesus' death and resurrection spread rapidly from Jerusalem to the whole world.

Secondly, the power of the Holy Spirit freed Jesus' disciples from fear and grief and transformed them into fully empowered witnesses of the risen Jesus. Previously, they did not have this power and virtue. They were very dependent on their limited, calculating thoughts, conditions and circumstances. They acted without confidence and half-decidedly. But the power of the Holy Spirit changed them in an instant into a new creature who glorified God through their preaching and testimony with authority. Andrea was also changed in an instant by the power of the Holy Spirit into a courageous and determined witness of Christ Jesus. Amen!

We see this transformation particularly in Apostle Peter. He repeatedly relied on his human strength and faithfulness. When Jesus foretold his suffering to the disciples, he said pompously without spiritual insight: "Never, Lord! This shall never happen to you." (Mt 16:22) "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." (Mt 26:33). But in front of a simple maid, he denied knowing Jesus at all. So he denied Jesus three times. Without the Holy Spirit, he became a helpless victim of the evil spirits and remained a loser.

But now the Holy Spirit came to him from heaven and filled this Peter. He was changed by 180°. The Holy Spirit made Peter a completely new creature! He was changed into the responsible shepherd of the first church, who encouraged the first Christians to suffer joyfully with Christ even in the midst of fiery persecutions. He became a courageous and faithful witness to Jesus' resurrection, proclaiming God's praises in every situation, whatever the cost (1 Peter 2:9).

In my youthful desires, I lived under the tyranny of sin. My philosophy of life was, "Let us eat and live comfortably, for tomorrow we are dead!" But through Romans 6:13, I too was allowed to encounter the resurrected Jesus who, through the obedience of faith, bore my sin on the cross and defeated the power of sin to give me eternal salvation. God made me a completely new creature. Through the power of His precious blood and through His promise of Acts 1:8, Jesus revealed to me His marvelous plan to use me as a witness of Jesus to the young people of Germany, Europe and even for the M-world. Thanks and praise be to God, who filled me with the power of the Holy Spirit. Only by His grace, He entrusted the dental studies to me and is currently using me as a witness of Jesus, starting with Leo, Paul, Malte, Chris and even 10 more medical students in Bonn and Mainz. I already see God's counsel to fill me with the Holy Spirit and use me as a witness of Christ Jesus on campus, in the O-world and M-world in this year. May God raise up 12 disciples of Jesus through me and fulfill His counsel for spiritual revival, O-Mission even M-Mission, starting with my sheep and the mobilization of the NG.

What was the reaction of the Jews from all over the world when the disciples, filled with the Holy Spirit, testified to the gospel of Jesus in all their own languages? Let's look at verses 12-13: "Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." Yet God also used this mockery as an opportunity to testify about Jesus, demonstrating the powerful work of the Holy Spirit as the fulfillment of God's prophecy. Peter stood up with the eleven. He raised his voice and began his Pentecost Sermon: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say."

What did Peter testify to the Jews in his Sermon at Pentecost? Let's take a look at verses 15-18. The coming of the Holy Spirit and his work had already been foretold by God through the prophet Joel. Verse 17 says: "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams." God does indeed pour out his Spirit on all people in the last days so that they receive God's vision and prophesy. Already in this year 2025, we have seen through the GLEF, IWBS, LSS, Mastercourse and Conferences that the Holy Spirit also fills the NG with His power and uses them as empowered preachers and leaders who received God's world mission vision and prophesied God's words. God is also giving dreams and vision to our missionaries to conquer the online world through online mission and establish

120 mission bases in the M-world for world mission and send out 100,000 missionaries.

In verses 22-24, Peter spoke very clearly to the Jews about the evil they had done to Jesus of Nazareth: "This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men,^[d] put him to death by nailing him to the cross." (23) He further testified in verse 24 to what God had done for the forgiveness and salvation of mankind: "But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him."

Without exception, all people must die sooner or later as a result of the dominion of sin. But Jesus is the Messiah promised by God, who was without sin. But he bore the sin of all people as the Passover lamb and died in our place. That is why he could not be held back from death. Through his sacrificial death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead, Jesus resolved the pain of death for us once and for all. Thanks and praise be to Jesus, who through the obedience of faith conquered the power of death and became the source of eternal salvation for us (Heb 5:8, 9). Thanks and praise be to God that we can now enjoy eternal life in him, in his resurrection power, and share in his glory as his heirs with Christ.

In verses 25-35, Peter spoke about the great faith of David. Why did Peter speak about the arch-father David? David already saw the promise of God that his descendant would sit on his throne. David therefore already testified to the risen Christ during his lifetime: "he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay." (2:31) Now this prophecy was fulfilled. God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day and seated him at his right hand and gave him the Holy Spirit. Yet Jesus did not keep him for himself, but poured him out on his disciples so that we too may receive the power of the Holy Spirit and fulfill God's counsel (32-35).

So what was Peter's conclusion of his Pentecost speech? Let us read verse 36: "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

Firstly, Jesus is the one who was crucified. Technically speaking, the Roman soldiers had crucified Jesus. But in reality, the Jews had killed Jesus through the hands of the Gentiles. If we think about it even more deeply, we realize that we also crucified Jesus in reality. Our sin put Jesus on the cross and cost him indescribable pain and agonizing (qualvollen), as Isaiah 53:5 says: "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."

Sin is separation from God and being an enemy of the holy God. We, the people, had to live helplessly and hopelessly under the power of sin. Faced with this helpless spiritual situation, he had to cry out in agony: "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?" But God himself made a plan of salvation for us, mankind. God, the righteous Creator God, did something

incomprehensible: God allowed Jesus, the Son of the Most High, to be sacrificed as the perfect sacrificial lamb on the cross for our perfect redemption and salvation.

Secondly, the crucified Jesus is the Lord. This Jesus, who died on the cross in our place without sin, was raised by God from the dead on the third day and exalted him to be the Lord - the King of kings. God made the crucified Jesus the true victor over the power of sin and death. Through his resurrection, the crucified Jesus finally freed us from the power of sin and became the source of eternal life for us. Now the crucified Jesus has become the eternal king, shepherd and ruler of our lives! Through his redemptive grace, we no longer want to serve sin, but live for Jesus alone.

Thirdly, the crucified Jesus is the Christ. Christ, word for word, means "God's chosen Savior and Redeemer". The Bible testifies about this Christ: "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Phil 2:6-8) This is how humble Jesus became our true Savior and Redeemer. Our sin problem was so graciously solved once and for all by the crucified Jesus. Those who accept Jesus as their Christ and Savior are born again into a new creature, as 2 Corinthians 5:17 says: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:^[a] The old has gone, the new is here!" Those who accept Jesus as their Christ will be restored in their love relationship with God and experience complete freedom and healing from the power of sin. Not only that, he may be empowered by the power of the Holy Spirit as an influential Bible teacher and shepherd. Praise and thanks be to God for His immeasurable wonderful grace!

How did people react to Peter's powerful Sermon at Pentecost? Peter's Sermon at Pentecost was very direct and clear. But it was particularly through this that the Holy Spirit worked to move the hearts of many Jews to repentance. The listeners recognized their sinfulness and lostness under the power of sin. They realized that they needed the grace of forgiveness and change. They asked Peter, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter answered, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (38) A mighty work of the Holy Spirit could then take place, as verse 41 testifies: "Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." This is how the first early church of the first Christians was founded in Jerusalem.

What were the characteristics of this first church? What body of Christ Jesus did they form? How have they been able to have great spiritual influence to this day? Let's read verse 2:42 together: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." The core of the first church was the apostles' teaching, namely the Biblestudy and the word-fellowship with one another and the common life through the breaking of bread and prayer. Let's look at verse 44: "All the believers were together and had everything in common." They all

lived consciously as members of the body of Christ. Nothing was more important to them than forming the body of Christ Jesus through spiritual fellowship with one another. They sold everything they had and had everything together. Devoted love for their neighbor and brotherly love was the virtue of their lives. Verse 46 testifies: "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts," The first church was so influential that new people were added to the church every day. This enabled the first church in Jerusalem to become a powerful spiritual headquarter for the world mission. The forming of the body of Christ Jesus in the first church was the beginning of the fulfillment of God's counsel for world mission in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

In the 1960s in Korea, the second poorest country in the world, M. Dr. Samuel Lee and M. Sarah Barry accepted God's Word from Mark 6:37a "Give them something to eat" with "Bible Korea, World Mission!". Through intensive Bible study, they encouraged the young Korean students to live a giving life and follow Jesus as their Lord and Christ. The hearts of the Korean students were moved. When they brought their decision of life for world mission to Jesus as their 5 loaves and 2 fishes, they were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit raised them up as campus shepherds and missionaries and sent them out as determined witnesses of Jesus to the many universities and countries. This is how our University Bibel Fellowship in Korea came into being. From this first UBF chapter, numerous young missionaries have been sent out to more than 90 countries around the world - to China, to North Korea, to the Muslim world and to the ends of the earth.

One of these nurse missionaries, M. Sarah Chang, founded a house church for the campus mission in Germany and Europe together with M. Peter Chang. Through her giving life and prayer of faith, the first church was founded and formed in Bonn. It turned out, however, that it was easier to catch a bird in the air with one's own fist than to raise up disciples of Jesus among the young German students. However, when student missionaries started by M. Dr. Peter Chang were empowered by the Holy Spirit, the fellowship grew mightily. With Mark 11:22 "Have faith in God!" and Phil 1:21 "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.", they were able to testify to Jesus as Lord and Christ even in the midst of difficult spiritual situation of Europe. God raised up numerous shepherds under the German students such as Sh. Peter S., Sh. Jochen S. and Sh. Warmherz as influential witnesses of Christ. The 2nd and 3rd generation missionaries also grew up as determined workers for the world mission through the example and good influence of the local shepherds and the missionaries. They are M. Dr. Petrus Chang, Sh. Dr. Johannes, Sh. Peter Ryu and the Gideon, Ezekiel and Josiah team. Thus, the Bonn UBF church is established as a mother church for many other churches like the first Jerusalem church for world mission.

Thanks and praise be to Jesus, the Christ and Lord, that he fulfilled God's wonderful promise and raised us up as his witnesses in Germany, in the M countries and to the

ends of the earth. Thanks and praise be to God that he encourages and admonish us through his word to embrace God's promise every day: "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." May God guide us and our fellowship to use our new life filled with the power of the Holy Spirit as influential witnesses of Christ, like the apostles and the first Christians; may God also use us very precious as a powerful spiritual headquarter like the first church for world mission. May God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, bring about spiritual revival in us, Germany and Europe. May God use each one of us as a witness of Christ Jesus until the end of the earth, until Jesus comes again!