

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 07.12.2020

POWER TO WITNESS! – ACTS 1:8-14

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.



In the O.T. the Power of the Holy Spirit was *reserved* only for *Kings or Prophets*, and occasionally the rare individual to accomplish something extraordinary. The filling of the Holy Spirit was indeed a rare gift and always temporary. God would empower unique individuals for a brief time for a specific purpose and then depart. So, the announcement that God would indwell each believer seemed totally impossible – unthinkable! Notice how He gave them “power.” He did not give them a detailed strategy. That would

not stand the test of time. He gave each member of the Kingdom the heart and mind of the King. Instead of a detailed battle plan, He gave each soldier a heart and mind that synchronizes with the mission and goals of the General. God, having baptized everyone into His Kingdom gives each citizen power to accomplish their assignment. **The Greek Term for power, Dunamis, means force, miraculous power, ability, strength, violence, mighty. It also means one's ability or capacity.** Being able to do something. The specific ability depends on the context. If the task is to lift great weight, the ability is physical strength. If the task is to defeat an army, the capacity is that of a skilled general. The Lord's promise leaves the “dunamis” indefinite. In other words, *whatever is required we will receive the Power to do what God asks!* Let's get into our study...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What stood out or spoke to you most from Pastor Ray's message this weekend?
2. When is your least favorite time to wait (i.e. in traffic, at a restaurant, on your spouse or children)?
3. When has something definitely been worth the wait?

At the end of His earthly ministry, **Jesus told His disciples to wait.** He was going to give them—and us—an incredible gift: the presence and power of His Holy Spirit. The disciples couldn't have fully appreciated what all that meant, but they waited nonetheless. When the Holy Spirit came, He empowered Christ's followers for a mission that was unstoppable. From that single location, their mission spread across the world, and continues today. The disciples' longing for the Holy Spirit's presence was surely worth the wait.

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 1:6-8 (POWER TO WITNESS)

1. What did the disciples expect from Jesus in this passage? What were they hoping He would do?
2. What does the power of the Holy Spirit enable His disciples to do?
3. What is the job of a witness? How are we witnesses for Christ?

In verse 8, Jesus laid out God's agenda succinctly. His mandate in this verse laid the foundation for the rest of the Book of Acts, which is largely about how the early believers carried out this mandate. Jesus told His followers to

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remain in Jerusalem and wait, **because they would soon receive the power the Father had promised (see v. 4).** When they were filled with the Spirit, **they would be His “witnesses”** telling what they had experienced with Jesus. They would do this with His power, not their own—the power of the Holy Spirit.

4. What do these verses teach us about God’s mission?

The Greek word for “power” is *dunamis*, from which we get our English words “dynamo,” “dynamite,” and “dynamic.” By the power of the Spirit, a tiny handful of believers turned the whole world upside down as the “gospel earthquake” rumbled from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. “Jerusalem . . . Judea and Samaria, and . . . the ends of the earth.” Jesus laid out a deliberate plan of expansion that began at home and moved outward geographically to include all people.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 1:9-11 (JESUS ASCENSION)

1. What did the angels tell the apostles about the return of Jesus (1:10-11)? See also Zech. 14:4, Dan 7:13-14.
2. Look back at your list of things that Jesus did and said in Acts 1:1-8. How was Jesus preparing the apostles? Why was this preparation important?
3. What question would you have liked to ask Jesus had you been there? How do you think Jesus might have answered you?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 1:12 – 14 (UPPER ROOM PRAYER METING)

1. What do you do when you find yourself waiting on the next thing God has for you?
2. For many of us, prayer is often a last resort. We sometimes think, “When all else fails, pray.” Why is this a wrong approach to prayer?
3. What are some of the benefits of praying together as a group?
4. Look at verse 14. How did prayer unite the disciples? How does it unite us as modern-day disciples of Jesus?

Prayer maximizes “Thee” and minimizes “me.” Prayer says, “My agenda is unimportant, Lord, but Your agenda is all-important.” The reason for so much disunity in the church is because many Christians contend for their own agendas, rather than God’s. Yet, we cannot know God’s agenda without reading His Word and spending time with Him in prayer, both privately and corporately.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 John 4:15-18 –(DEALING WITH FEAR- *Pastor Ray addressed the great fear that people are experiencing today in light of Covid-19 and all the social unrest. What does the Bible tell us about fear..*)

1. What are some of the instances in the Bible you can remember when the people of God are encouraged to not fear?
2. Why do you think the Bible, in so many places, urges the people of God to “fear not”?

Fear is a barometer of our faith. When we are afraid, it is often because we are failing to believe something to be true that God says about Himself. The main point of John’s first letter was encouragement for Christians to feel confident in their salvation and understand the truth of the gospel amid false teachings that were circulating in the early church. It’s not surprising, then, that John talks at length about the reality of God’s love for us and the implications His love has on our lives. Love casts our fear and creates a confident faith in Jesus’ followers.

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3. John wrote that God is love, which means God and love can never be separated. How does this truth impact your understanding of who God is and how you relate to Him?
4. According to verse 17, how does the love of God in your life remove any fears you might have about the day of judgment?
5. What specifically has God done on our behalf to show His love for us and insure our right standing with Him on this day of judgment?

Read Psalm 56:3-4. How is overcoming fear related to knowing and believing the revelation of who God is in His Word?

These verse aren't promises of an easy, pain-free life. They are instead promises of a God who is still in control and loving when difficult circumstances happen. Hardship and struggles are all but guarantees for the disciple of Christ. But when those times come, we may rest assured that God has not abandoned us. Instead of turning to fear and despair, we can turn again to the Word of God to refresh our memories of what we know to be true. During those moments of fear, God is calling us to make an active choice of faith.

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

The Universal result of following God is Martyrdom. Because people cannot handle people in a relationship with God. That is why the Pharisees and Sadducees killed all the Prophets. They did not want to hear from God. They just wanted the free practice of their religion. The practice of 'Religion' is NOT enough, the Freedom of Religion is NOT enough. Cultural Christianity is NOT enough. He who has ears to hear must recognize that Religion is about Money, Power and Control and the devil knows that. There will be a religious movement, and a so called morality. The devil loves religion! The Antichrist who will appear on the scene will give them what they want. Satan uses religion to combat true faith. God desires relationship! Relationship is about intimacy with the Living God through His Son Jesus Christ. He who has ear let him hear....

1. What costs are there today for following Jesus and being his witness?
2. What (if anything) holds you back from being a witness for Christ? (fear, lack of trust)
3. How can you commit yourself to serving Jesus on His mission this week? How can you put His agenda above your own? How can you overcome fear?

PRAYER - Thank Jesus for sending you the Holy Spirit "the Helper," when you trusted in Him in faith. Praise Him that He has provided everything we need to faithfully follow Him. Pray for opportunities to share Christ to people you come in contact with. Thank the Lord that He will never ever abandon you and has left you the Comforter.

***"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."
(Luke 9:23)***