



5 June 2005 - "Living in personal revival"

(Summary of sermon by Rev Erlo Stegen)

Acts 1:1

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach

In the beginning of the revival at KwaSizabantu Mission, Rev. Stegen and the congregation held services at Mapumulo, as the current site had not yet been obtained. They started to read the first chapters of the book of Acts and were determined not to take the reasons of God's word only but to accept everything. From the first verse, God spoke to them.

Verse 1 is addressed to Theophilus and Luke writes that he wants to report all that the Lord Jesus did and preached. This cut to the bone. So often people say "do what I say and don't do what I do." In the Bible, it is written how the people shouldn't do what the pharisees did. The Lord Jesus practised what He preached. For this reason, He had authority that the pharisees didn't have.

God spoke personally to those at Mapumulo about irritability and anger and people got converted through that verse.

Then they read about the ascension of the Lord Jesus. After the ascension, the people were in one room and prayed. They were of one soul and one heart. The soul is your mind, thoughts, feelings, taste and your will. At Pentecost, the most striking fact was that there were so many different people and yet they were of one soul, one heart and one mind. No matter from what race they were, they were one. It becomes clear that there is a huge difference between the early church and the church today.

Later in Acts, it is recorded that Peter and John went to the temple to pray and found a lame man begging at the temple gate. Peter and John said that they did not have silver and gold, but what they had they would give him and he jumped up and began to walk. In the Bible, it is written that he who believes in the Lord Jesus will do greater things than what He did.

Peter said "look at me." This seems so wrong. One should look at the Lord Jesus. A person should not say "look at me." It doesn't seem right theologically. In another place in the Bible, however, it is written that we are God's letter, written not with ink but by God's Spirit. Your life must be a letter for everyone to see. You must keep your mouth shut if your life is not in accordance with what you say. The lame person saw something in Peter and John and so he obeyed them.

Another incident is about Ananias and Sapphira. In the early church, the people shared and didn't have a what-is-mine-is-mine attitude. They helped each other. They sold their farms and businesses and laid the money at the disciples' feet. Where is your money? Close to your heart or under your feet? Ananias and Sapphira both agreed to lie about the money they had received for the sale of their farm and which they brought to Peter and the disciples. The Holy Spirit told Peter there was something wrong and Ananias fell down dead at his feet. When Sapphira came in, she too lied about the amount of the money, and received the same judgement. Because of a white lie, they had to die. If Ananias and Sapphira were of your family, what would you have said about such a judgement? Christians might think this is harsh, but this church shook earth and hell.

Every Christian should be prepared to live this kind of revival life.