

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon January 9, 2022

Acts 1: 4 "Wait for the Promise of the Father"

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, 3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." 6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." 9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." 12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.

I. Introduction

- a. One preacher said, "If you are not waiting on the Lord in prayer, you have no reason to be involved in any ministry. Much of our zealous work is produced by the efforts of our own arm of strength and does not shake this world. All it does is it shakes and wears us out. And I speak from personal testimony. I have been guilty of going before waiting numerous times - and that amounts to ministry in the flesh that does not accomplish anything. But the Scripture says that those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. We must wait if we are to have the power to run. Those who wait upon the Lord avoid a harried ministry filled with burnout and anxiety. But those who can't waste time waiting on the Lord (they've got to get going) find that they waste time running fast on a treadmill going nowhere."
  - i. Saints, my goal today is to persuade you that you do not pray enough. And, also, I aim to persuade you that your prayers are not filled up with truth. And, finally, I hope you will see that your prayers are not filled up with faith and expectation. In response, I hope you will pray more (both alone and with other saints), pray more Scripture, and pray with breathless expectation of God's shaking the world by His Spirit in response to our prayers.
- b. Today's sermon: Acts 1: 4 "Wait for the Promise of the Father"
  - i. Assembled together with them v4
  - ii. Jesus commanded His disciples v4

1. Do not depart from Jerusalem v4
  2. Wait for the Promise of the Father v4
    - a. Which you have heard from Me v4
  - iii. Questions to know, love and obey God
- II. Assembled together with them v4
- a. “And being assembled together with them”
    - i. Here, Luke takes Theophilus back to the ascension day teaching of Jesus. It is during this final day of teaching that Jesus gives His disciples these commandments. All the disciples heard Jesus give these commandments.
    - ii. This is during the meal Jesus shared with them on the ascension day.
      1. Keener “Presumably, “sharing salt” (συναλιζόμενος) here functions as a metonymy for “sharing a meal,” which Luke clearly affirms Jesus did with his disciples after the resurrection (Luke 24:30, 35, 41–43; Acts 10:41), probably including on this occasion”<sup>1</sup>
    - iii. So, the disciples are together with Jesus, most likely on the ascension day, most likely during a meal.
- III. Jesus commanded His disciples v4
- a. “He commanded them”
    - i. Jesus not only taught His disciples about the Kingdom of God during His earthly ministry, but here at the end of His time on earth, He also commands them where to begin their mission, and what the first phase of their mission entails. They must wait for the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem.
  - b. Do not depart from Jerusalem v4
    - i. “He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem”
      1. The disciples might have been eager to take the Gospel of the Kingdom to the whole world. But, Jesus knows they are not yet fully equipped for this battle. They have been educated, but not empowered. They must be humbled. They must wait on God.
      2. One pastor has said, “When we rely upon organization, we get what organization can do; when we rely upon education, we get what education can do; when we rely upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do, and so on. Nor am I disposed to undervalue any of these things in their proper place, but when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do.”
  - c. Wait for the Promise of the Father v4
    - i. “He commanded them ... to wait for the Promise of the Father”
    - ii. Wait = this Greek word is used only here in the NT, and it indeed has one simple meaning: to wait. It is related to the Greek word for “abide”. We know looking back that the disciples were waiting, abiding, in Jerusalem for 10 days before God poured out His Holy Spirit. They were together

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<sup>1</sup> Keener, C. S. (2012–2013). [\*Acts: An Exegetical Commentary & 2: Introduction and 1:1–14:28\*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 674). Baker Academic.

praying during this time. The central activity of their waiting was their praying. And, they learned this lesson pretty well, because we see prayer as the fuel for Gospel victory throughout the entire book of Acts.

- iii. After the ascension, on ascension day: Acts 1:13,14 “13 And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”
  1. They were all together. The eleven, the women, Mary His mother, and also the brothers of Jesus.
  2. They continued – this shows us their waiting plan. It’s what they were about as they waited. Not necessarily continually, but they built their schedule around prayer.
  3. With one accord – there was no disagreement amongst them. They all agreed to obey Jesus together by waiting in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. And, they all agreed the best thing they could do while they waited was pray together to God.
  4. Prayer and supplication – this was full-orbed prayer. They cried out to God in all forms of prayer and requests. Praise, gratitude, confession of sin, and laying their needs before God together.
  5. One result: the Word came forth from Peter, and they chose a disciple to replace Judas. They also prayed again as they cast lots before God gave them Matthias.
- iv. Peter and John after they went before the Council. Acts 4:23-33 “23 And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25 who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.' 27 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. 29 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. 32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither

did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. 33 And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.”

1. Prayer is their corporate response to persecution.
  2. Lord, You are God, creator of all things – they begin their prayer proclaiming God’s total power, in contrast to the illusion of the Council
  3. They quote Psalm 2 in their prayer in order to emphasize the futility of those like Herod and Pilate who set themselves up against God.
  4. They reference God’s total sovereignty “to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.”
  5. They acknowledge the threats are intended to frighten them into disobedience, and they cry out for boldness. They know they will run away without God’s help. Humility crying out for help with obedience.
  6. They ask for healing and signs and wonders to be done in Jesus’ Name.
  7. Result: “And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.”
    - a. Unity of the multitude of believers
    - b. Great power in evangelism
    - c. Great grace upon them all
- v. Acts 6:1-7 “Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; 4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word. 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, 6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. 7 Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith. ”
1. Not only the church members continuing in praying, but the leaders intend to “give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

- a. Continually = to be steadfastly attentive unto, to give unremitting care to a thing. More than the continuing we saw in Acts 1.
  - b. They prayed and laid hands on the deacons.
  - c. Result: Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.
- vi. Acts 7:55-60 "55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, 56 and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; 58 and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep."
  - 1. Prayer must include seeing Jesus accurately.
  - 2. Even as he was dying, Stephen continued in prayer and his prayer is filled with love for his enemies.
  - 3. Result: great persecution arises that leads to church growth.
- vii. Acts 8:14-17 "Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit."
  - 1. The prayers of faith lead to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- viii. Acts 9:11,12 "So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. 12 And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."
  - 1. Ananias is praying when God calls Him to go and help Saul.
  - 2. Saul was praying when God gave him the vision of Ananias coming and helping him.
  - 3. New relationship and new sight arise from prayer.
- ix. Acts 9:37-42 "But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. 38 And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. 39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while

she was with them. 40 But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. 41 Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. 42 And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord."

1. Peter prays and God raises Tabitha from the dead.
  2. Result: many new converts throughout the city.
- x. Acts 10:1,2;9;30-33 "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, 2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always."... "9 as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. "... "30 So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, 31 and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. 32 Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.' 33 So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God."
1. Cornelius prayed to God always. During his prayers, God told him to send for Simon. He told him his name and location. Cornelius obeyed.
  2. Peter was praying as the men arrived from Cornelius.
  3. Result: the Word of God to the Gentiles, new converts, new relationships, Holy Spirit outpoured, baptisms of Gentiles
    - a. 10:44 "While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. 45 And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, 47 "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days."
- xi. Acts 12: 5-8;11,12 "5 Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. 6 And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. 7 Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and

a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands. 8 Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me." ... "11 And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people." 12 So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying."

1. Constant prayer for Peter while he was in prison, offered to God by the church. Sounds like corporate prayer.
  2. Result: deliverance of Peter by a mighty angelic miracle. The answered prayer seems to come to the church as they were still praying for Peter.
- xii. Acts 13: 1-3 "Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away."
1. They ministered to the Lord: have you ever considered this aspect of prayer. God is pleased when we worship Him. We minister to God!
  2. Fasting accompanies prayer.
  3. Result: Holy Spirit speaks to them. The missionary work of Saul and Barnabas begin. They fast and pray some more, lay hands on them, and send them away.
- xiii. Acts 14:23 "23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed."
1. Church leaders are appointed with prayer and fasting, just like in Acts 6. Result: they are commended to the safe care of God.
- xiv. Acts 16:13-16 "13 And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. 14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. 15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us. 16 Now it happened, as we went to prayer..."

1. Note the things God does during prayer meetings. New relationships. Evangelism. Conversion. Household baptisms. Hospitality.
  2. "as we went to prayer" – again, prayer defines them and their schedule and their activities.
- xv. Acts 16:22-26 "22 Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. 23 And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. 24 Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. 25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed."
1. Midnight prayer and worship is their response to beatings and imprisonment.
  2. Result: prisoners here the prayers and the worship hymns. A great earthquake occurs during these prayers and hymns of Paul and Silas. The foundations of the prison are shaken. All the doors fly open. All the prisoners' chains were loosed.
- xvi. Acts 20:32-38 "32 So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. 34 Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. 35 I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " 36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, 38 sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship."
1. Paul kneels down and prays together with the elders of Ephesus before he leaves.
  2. Result: wept freely, great love and affection, sorrow that they would not see him again, staying together until parting necessary
  3. Note kneeling.
- xvii. At Tyre on the way to Jerusalem. Acts 21:5,6 "5 When we had come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till we were out of the city. And we knelt down on the shore and prayed. 6 When we had taken our leave of one another, we boarded the ship, and they returned home."



1. They all knelt down on the shore together and prayed. They stayed together until the necessity of parting.
  2. Note kneeling in prayer.
- xviii. Acts 28:7-10 “7 In that region there was an estate of the leading citizen of the island, whose name was Publius, who received us and entertained us courteously for three days. 8 And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him. 9 So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed. 10 They also honored us in many ways; and when we departed, they provided such things as were necessary.”
1. Prayer before the healing of diseases.
  2. Leads to many healed, to good relationships, honor and receiving provisions as assistance on the journey.
- xix. Which you have heard from Me v4
1. "which," He said, "you have heard from Me"
    - a. Jesus had taught His disciples before about the Holy Spirit, during His ministry in the book of Luke.
    - b. Note here the connection between the Holy Spirit's activity and our prayers. Continuing in prayer. Prayers filled with God's Word. Even continual prayer. Prayers filled with faith and expectations of visible fruit.

IV. Questions to know, love and obey God