

Dynamite In The Pulpit!  
Dynamite In The Pew!  
Dynamite In The Church Programme!  
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**Bible Text:** Acts 1  
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Take out the Authorized Version of holy Scripture that you will find in the pew and turn with me to the first chapter of the book of the Acts, the book of the Acts and the chapter one. If you want to know why we only use the Authorized Version of holy Scripture here you will get a little leaflet or booklet on the tables at the church doors. Pick one up for others, for your friends and read it. It is important information therein.

We read alternatively down the first 14 verses of this chapter. Acts chapter one. Taking your time from me let us read it together.

The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.<sup>1</sup>

And we will end the lesson at verse 14. And God shall stamp with his own divine approval this reading from his very own infallible Word.

I want to speak this morning on this portion of Scripture which we read together laying special emphasis on verse eight of chapter one of the book of the Acts.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”<sup>2</sup>

Here we have power for the pulpit, power for the pew and power for the program. And I want you to note five spheres in which this power is manifested. The first sphere is that of a special prohibition. You see, when the apostles came together they thought that the kingdom of heaven on earth in regard to the millennial glory that is to come at the Lord's second return would commence.

So in verse six they said, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”<sup>3</sup>

“And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.”<sup>4</sup>

Here we have this special prohibition. The Lord knew that there was going to be in the Church a sidetracking of the primary task of the Church in evangelism and in evangelization. So he said, “Look, you, your business is in the field of soteriology, salvation of souls, not in the area of eschatology, the doctrine of the last things.”

The great British Museum claims to have almost every book that was ever published in English. It has miles, literally miles of bookshelves on the interpretation of the prophecies of Scripture where eminent scholars decided on the task of date setting. But the dates came and the Lord did not come.

Mr. Spurgeon said very caustically, he said, “Some writers are wonderfully definite. They know within half an hour when the Lord should come. Some of them were very distinct

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 1:1-14.

<sup>2</sup> Acts 1:8.

<sup>3</sup> Acts 1:6.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 1:7.

about all the events. They met them all within a very few years. The men who wrote the books, happily for themselves, had mostly died before the appointed time had come. It is always wise to pitch a long period of prophecy that you may be out of the way if the thing doesn't come to time when you have said it is going to come to time."

Of course, the great time setter was a man called the reverend Michael Baxter. We still have his paper in existence today, *The Christian Herald*. And he published a large volume called *40 Future Wonders* in which he gave the exact day when all the things mentioned in the book of the Revelation would be fulfilled. And he, unfortunately didn't pitch them too far away, so he was living. He was living when all the dates came. And nothing happened.

But he didn't blush at all. He revised the book and put all the dates 50 years ahead and sold it out again as a mass seller. The story is told that he came once to his home and his wife, serving sandwiches and tea to some friends and he said to his wife, "What are in these sandwiches?"

She said, "They are date sandwiches, darling."

And he said, "Are they good dates?"

She said, "A lot better than yours anyway," and she was absolutely right.

But the prohibition here is something we need to remember. It is not our business to know the day when the Lord shall come again.

You know, I ask myself a question. What would happen if we all knew the day when the Lord was to come again? Instead of being a deterrent to sin, it would encourage people to go about their sinning knowing that they knew the time when the Lord was coming for a final judgment.

And I thought of the days of Noah. They all knew that at 120 years the flood was going to come. Well, it didn't make any difference. They went on sinning and sinning as Christ said, "Even if a man came from the dead, they will not repent."

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."<sup>5</sup>

So we need to keep in mind, yes, the Lord may come at the cock crowing. He may come at midday. He may come at midnight. But we are not to know the time of his coming which he has set in his own place of knowledge.

So the first thing is we need to get on with the job at hand. And the job is not to waste time in useless prophetic disputes about when this or that should happen. No. But we should be about the business of winning souls for Christ.

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<sup>5</sup> Luke 16:31.

Then if you look at the text again you will notice that it works in the sphere of the Spirit's power. The Lord exhorts his disciples to wait and to tarry. The Spirit's power is to come upon them in a new and monumental manner, the like of which has never been witnessed before.

This truth is indefinable. It is inexplicable and it is mysterious and divine that the Holy Spirit comes upon the people of God to enable them to evangelize the lost and to give them success in their service in the field of evangelism.

Here is a baptism of men and women in the essence of deity itself. The atmosphere in the heart of a man filled with the Holy Spirit has been transformed and the life and the power and the joy of God becomes his friend.

This is power and not knowledge. He has people limited about certain knowledge as we have seen. So it is not knowledge in the field of the last things that he needs, but it is power to pray, power to serve, power to witness and power to be victorious and successful in his service for Jesus Christ.

This power of the Holy Spirit is miraculous power. It cannot be defined or explained by men.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”<sup>6</sup>

There is a power that God's people can have, shrouded with mystery inexplicable which does something in their hearts and as a result, the service catches fire. This starts, of course, with special, peculiar spiritual little power.

“Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.”<sup>7</sup>

The spiritual alone can understand the Spirit. The natural man by natural birth and natural ability cannot understand the Spiritual things of God. But if a man has the Holy Spirit of God in his fulness, that man will have a touch of power upon his mental ability.

“The world by wisdom knew not God.”<sup>8</sup>

The man in the world and of the world remains in mental ignorance of the wisdom of God. But the most illiterate man, the most uneducated man, a man who would have little as well as scholastic knowledge is concerned becomes, by the infilling of the Spirit of God a man with special mental powers.

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<sup>6</sup> John 3:8.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 21:16.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:21.

I have been in these as I have seen men and women transformed by the power of the gospel, showing in their spiritual life, a special mental equipment which causes them to understand the Scriptures, which causes them to understand the way of prayer, which causes them to understand the way to serve the Lord.

So this power is mental power. It is also moral power. The Spirit of God transforms a man who is filled with the Spirit morally. He rejects what is immoral. He rejects what is against the principles of holiness and the practice of holiness. The Spirit inspires him to walk in the way of God and not only to walk in the way of God, but the Spirit imparts courage, confidence, zeal, love, patience and perseverance. This is the power of the Spirit of God. It acts on a man's mental power. It acts on a man's moral power.

The most immoral person is transformed.

“And such were some of you: but ye are washed.”<sup>9</sup>

This power of the Spirit not only works in the mental sphere and in the moral sphere, but it works mightily in the sphere of a man's heart.

Oh, what mighty power a man has who has become a prince with God and has prevailed. What a transformation takes place when a man receives the power to make himself a successful wrestler with God.

What a victory is wrought in a man's heart when he knows what it is to go in and pray to his Father which seeth in secret and his father that seeth in secret rewards him openly.

So we are talking here about mental power. We are talking here about moral power. We are talking here about mighty power, but we are talking also about miraculous power.

Men have power because of their abilities and talents and because of that they have influence. But here we have the influence of [?] power which enables a man who has met with Christ and has been filled with the Spirit of Christ to have power as he witnesses for Christ. He is not speaking as if he was one that mocked, but he is speaking with a dynamic power that sets his word on fire and makes that word burn its way into the consciences of those to whom he witnesses.

You know, these apostles were told they had to tarry for this power. [?] Peter would have liked to have started preaching right away. But the Spirit of God said, “Peter, hold your tongue. Until I open your mouth, you have to say nothing. You have got to go back to the upper room and you have to bow the knee and you have to then remain in prayer until I baptize you with this power.”

James and John were called the sons of Boanerges, the sons of thunder, but they were told by the Lord, “There will be no thunder drop for your mouth or power from your

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<sup>9</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:11.

witness until you go back to the upper room and remain upon your knees when the Spirit of God shall come upon you.”

This miraculous power is the power of the Spirit, the power of the Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit of God. And it is the only thing that can fit us to do the work of God as it ought to be done.

So we discover this power operates in the sphere of prohibition. It also operates in the sphere of real power mentally, morally, mightily and miraculously. But let us look at the text again.

And the text says, “Ye shall be witnesses unto [people] both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria.” It doesn’t say that at all. It says, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me.”<sup>10</sup>

But have I not to go out and witness to others?

Yes, you have. But that witness will not be effectual unless it is witnessing unto me. So we have to witness to what the Lord is, whom he is, his person must be witnessed to. We need to call men not to behold us, but to behold him. Our infilling with the Holy Spirit will enable us to witness of whom the Lord really is. We will not be presenting our view of Christ. We will be presenting a view of Christ that our eye has seen, that our ear hath heard and our hands have handled. This is the transforming power of the infilling of the Spirit of God. Christ takes central stage, dear sinner. And until he takes center stage, central place in our hearts, until he takes central place in our service, until he takes central place in our lives, until he takes central place in our prayers, we will not be witnessing unto him. We have to witness about whom he is.

But then we have to witness about what he has done.

This afternoon you take this book of Acts and read Peter’s sermon in Acts chapter two and you will find that Peter insists in whom the Savior is and then he insists on what the Savior has done.

You see, the apostles knew what he had done. They knew that he had hung on a cross, that he had bled to death, that he was taken from that cross by Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus and he was put into a tomb. They knew that.

But now he was alive. He said, “Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”<sup>11</sup>

They had a practical experience of what Christ had done. He had risen from the dead.

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<sup>10</sup> Acts 1:8.

<sup>11</sup> Luke 24:39.

The message that must ring in our souls and transform our lives is the message about risen Christ. What has he done?

I believe those disciples all went and touched him and they felt the warmth of his body. He wasn't a corpse. He wasn't a phantom. He was a real, living Savior. The Savior that for three years they had followed was still the same Jesus that stood in the midst. It was that message that they were to deliver.

But something more. If we are filled with the Holy Spirit we have to witness to what or who Christ is. We are to witness what he has done, but we are also to witness in what he has revealed to us. He told them they were not to speak their own testimony. He told them, "I have taught you that ye might teach others what I have taught you. I have instructed you so that you will instruct others in the matters that I have instructed you in."

We are to relate to men the up to date revelation that God has given us daily of his Son and what he has revealed.

And then the infilling of the Holy Spirit makes us witnesses to his saving power. We have been saved ourselves. And the best testimony is our own testimony. That is why three times in the book of the Acts you have three records of the testimony of the apostle Paul and how God saved Saul of Tarsus, three times it is written in the book of the Acts that [?] his conversion, but if we are not right up to date, if the last time we talked to the Lord was three years ago and we have had a formal relationship with Christ ever since, we have never touched him for a very long time, we will not be able to witness to him or for him.

You see, this must be something that is renewed every morning e'er we go out over the threshold. I need to meet Jesus. I need to have a fresh experience of his love. I need to feel the cleansing of his blood. I need to have my heart warmed within me. I need to be filled with the Spirit of God.

There is something more that we need to witness to. We need to witness about his sustaining power. Christ not only saves us, but thank God he teaches. And I tell you, it must be a task to keep all of the children of God.

Mr. Nicholson used to say that if all the children of God got to heaven without being changed, heaven would be the greatest [?] ever imagined to keep them all from cutting one another's throats. How true it is.

Until we are transformed with prayer and Bible study, then we cannot go and witness. This is the field of service.

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Acts 1:8.

Well, you notice fourthly in this text there is a specific program set out. It doesn't say they are to witness first in Jerusalem, then after Jerusalem is all evangelized they are to go into Judea and then when they have finished with Judea they are to go to Samaria and then they can go to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Please note what the Lord said. He said both. This is not consecutive, this evangelization. This is concurrent. This is simultaneous evangelization. We are to evangelize everywhere, not on a first, second and third principle, but, "both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."<sup>13</sup>

Every field that we enter is a field for evangelization.

You know, the Lord spoke to the disciples once and a time about the fields being white unto harvest. He didn't say the field. He said the fields because it is the fields about Jerusalem is white, but the field of Judea is also white. And the field of Samaria is also white. And the fields to the uttermost parts of the earth, they also are white unto harvest.

The program of missionary activity is not designed by the directors of any missionary society, but it has been designed by the Father and the Son and of the Holy Ghost. And it is the whole world.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel."<sup>14</sup>

And, finally, for my time is more than gone, will you look lastly at this text and you find that this text is linked to the working and the sphere of the Second Coming of Christ.

The power of the Holy Spirit rides us to a specific goal. It spurs us on to the finality of God's purpose and the finality of God's purpose is the return of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven.

These two men in white apparel said, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."<sup>15</sup>

The evangelization of the world is the secret to the Lord's coming. The Lord told them that this gospel must be preached in all the world. "Then shall the end come."<sup>16</sup> And until there is a world wide witness of the gospel to the whole world Jesus will not come. Then shall the end come.

To evangelize is to hasten the coming of the Lord. Peter speaks about looking for and hastening unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Mark 16:15.

<sup>15</sup> Acts 1:11.

<sup>16</sup> Matthew 24:14.



How will I hasten to his coming? How shall I speak his coming? By engaging as a Spirit filled believer in the work of evangelization. To evangelize is to hasten the coming of Christ.

Oh that God might speed his Church in the task that is set before us in this great text of Scripture.

John Ryland, who was a great preacher and hymn writer, wrote a line:

The baffled prince of hell  
In vain new projects tries,  
Truth's empire to repel  
By cruelty and lies,  
The infernal gates shall rage in vain,  
Conquest awaits the Lamb once slain.

Jesus not only saves, but Jesus reigns and we can extend his dominion by being filled with the Spirit and then engaging in evangelizing.

May God burn these truths into our hearts that we not be hearers only, but may we be doers of the good Word of God.