

Acts
Prerequisites, Preparation & Practice
Acts 1:6-26

*The key to the apostles' successful fulfillment of Jesus' commission was their baptism with, and consequent indwelling by, the Holy Spirit. Without this divine enablement, they would only have been able to follow Jesus' example, but with it, Jesus could literally continue to do His work and teach His words through them. Consequently their preparation for the baptism of the Spirit was very important. Luke recorded it to highlight its foundational significance.
(Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on Acts, 2014 Edition)*

- I. A Time of Transition (Acts 1:6-26)
 - A. Final Dialogue (6-8)
 1. Disciples' Question (6)
 2. Jesus' Response (7-8)
 - B. Immediate Response (9-11)
 1. Ascension/Wonder (9-10)
 2. Action/Present and Future (11)
 - C. Next - and Sustained - Response (12-26)
 1. Prayer (14, 24-25)
 2. Faithfulness and Obedience to Scripture (15-20)
 3. Action Orientation (21-22, 26)
 4. Reliance on God's Direction (24-25)
- II. Truths
 - A. As we wait for the consummation of God's Kingdom, we are to be Spirit-empowered witnesses who speak the words and do the works of Jesus. (6-11)
 - B. A Biblical template for being Jesus' witnesses involves purposeful prayer, obedience to Scripture, orientation toward action and complete reliance on the Holy Spirit's guidance. (12-26)

Go Forward

1. God's Kingdom will be consummated when Jesus returns in the future to establish it (see Revelation 19-22). In the mean time, Christians have been called to purity. John writes the following: *Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is. And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure (1 John 3:2-3 NLT)*. Invest some time prayerfully meditating on Galatians 5:16-26 and Colossians 3:1-17. Ask God to bring to mind those things that are impure in your life, confess them to Him (and make amends to others as needed), and submit to the Holy Spirit's power and direction to walk in purity.
2. What might it look like this coming week if you lived life through the following simple grid:
 - Praying at some point each day in a purposeful (i.e., God, your will be done) way;
 - Taking actions and making choices in alignment with the Scriptural truth you know;
 - Having a mindset of "I'm going to take action" instead of "I'll wait and/or pass";
 - Intentional awareness of the Holy Spirit's presence and power in your life.

If we're using Biblical truth as our guide, this simple grid is one through which we all should be living our lives. Will you ask God to empower you to give it a try? How might your life look different if you did so?