

Acts 1.8 Observations

Context Observations

- 1.1: “former account” - Luke/Acts is 1 book, 2 volumes
- 1.1: written to “Theophilus” (Luke 1.3 calls him “most excellent Theophilus” - perhaps a title of importance) ... there is a particular individual in mind when Luke is writing
- 1.4: introduction/reminder to the “Promise of the Father” (giving of the HS)
- 1.6: “Therefore” – because of the Promise of the Father a discussion arose – “Lord will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”
 - Jewish understanding of restoration of Kingdom
- 1.7: Jesus tells them a negative (this is not your focus, 1.7) and a positive (this is your focus, 1.8)
- 1.8: BUT - showing contrast with verse 7 on what is to be the focus of the disciples

Verse Observations

- Verse 8 is in the middle of a dialogue from Jesus to the disciples above what their focus is to be on
- Interesting to note that this is the last recorded words of Jesus before He ascended (see 1.9) – this must be very significant, the last commission and exhortation

BUT

- showing contrast with verse 7 on what is to be the focus of the disciples (see above)

YOU (main subject)

- Used 3x in the verse (You shall receive power ... Holy Spirit has come upon you ...you shall be witnesses)
- Specifically the apostles that are there (1.2) – but likely 500+ disciples who heard about Jesus calling the disciples to the mountain (Matt 28.7,10,16)
 - What do we know about the apostles/disciples?
 - Jesus had chosen them
 - They lived, walked, and heard Jesus talk for 3 years
 - They are asking questions about the restoration of the Kingdom (1.6)
 - They were all Jewish
 - Many of them have backgrounds as fishermen

SHALL RECEIVE (main verb #1)

- Future indicative (simple statement of fact)
- Indicates that I am given something

POWER

- This is what I shall receive
- Greek word “dynamis” – strength, power, ability
 - Not physical power but “spiritual power” (know this because it is via the HS)
 - This word in Acts (10x) is translated KJV “power” or “miracles”

- Luke uses this word (15x) translated KJV “mighty works,” “power,” “virtue”

WHEN THE HS HAS COME UPON YOU

- Shows cause/effect relationship
 - I don’t receive power unless the HS has come upon
- Another person shows up in verse: HS
 - What do I know about the HS?
 - 3rd person of the Trinity
 - He is Holy
 - He is a Spirit (supernatural)
 - Linked with power, resource, strength, ability
- Power does not exist within the person but as a result of the HS within (when the HS has come upon them)
- Speaks about “timing” - you don’t receive power until something happens
- This is the central statement by which the “you shall receive” and “you shall be” revolves around – this is the linchpin of the entire work

SHALL BE (main verb #2)

- Future indicative (simple statement of fact)
- Order seems important – I don’t become a witness and then I receive power ... rather I receive the power which in turn causes me to be a witness
 - I don’t have to whip people up to be witnesses if they are filled with the HS

WITNESS

- Greek word “martyrs” - coming from the idea of martyr
 - Not just someone who dies for their faith but someone willing to stand for something even in the midst of death
- Contains the idea of being a “witness” to something (I have seen something and will declare it ... I have experienced something)
 - Disciples have been “witnesses” of the life of Christ for 3 years and now they are to go out and declare what they have seen
 - Up to this point they have operated out of their strength ... now they will be witnesses in the power of the Spirit

UNTO ME

- Shows ownership of the witness – we are witnesses of Jesus for Jesus
- *Does this contain the idea of ambassadorship?*

BOTH (KJV, NASB)

- Interesting that a lot of translations don’t include “both” (te) – just say “in Jerusalem...”
- Both in English assumes 2 and yet the list is of 4 places
 - The word TE actually indicates the beginning of a series (whether 2 or 200)
 - So this starts a list of the places where the disciples are going to be witnesses

PLACES

- Important to note places and what they signify
- This order becomes the outline for the entire book of Acts
 - Disciples start in Jerusalem and then disperse because of persecution (8:1)

1. In Jerusalem

- What do we know about Jerusalem?
 - It's a city
 - The Jewish temple and headquarters of Judaism is there
 - This is where the crucifixion took place ... this is not long after the event so things are still in a bit of a turmoil with what took place with Jesus (possibly dangerous to be a witness here)
 - It is where the disciples are located at this point
 - It is their current "home" - Jesus is calling them to start witnessing where they are at – in their own hometown

2. In Judea

- Jerusalem is a city within the province of Judea (like a city within a state)
 - Start in the city where you are and then go out to the "state"
 - Several provinces were in this area: Judea in the South, Galilee in the North, Samaria in the middle, and Peraea on the eastern side of the Jordan River

3. and Samaria

- A province between Judea and Galilee
- Hated by the Jews ... a place that was usually avoided at all costs (walk around it)
 - Go to the place that you would normally avoid - the out-of-bounds locations, the places that you despise
- Jesus is linking Samaria with Judea (something that would normally be separated)
 - Also see John 4 with the Samaritan woman

4. And unto the uttermost part of the earth

- There is no place where I am not to go – I am to go everywhere
- Earth: several different words for "earth" - here it means the "inhabited earth" (the areas that are populated)
 - So its not a general commission to go to every place but specifically the places that are inhabited by people
 - People seem to be the focus and significance in being a witness
 - *Does this suggest that I am not a witness unless I am amongst people??*
- I am not to stop being a witness until the entire population of the earth hears it