

“New Beginnings!”
God’s Story of Redemption — Part 7
Acts 1—10 and 12

1. The commission and departure of Jesus.

So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Acts 1:6-11

***Jesus said we would be witnesses,
not do witnessing!***

Application: Being a witness is who we are, 24/7.

2. The arrival of the Holy Spirit.

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:1-4

***God infiltrates our “Lower Story”
through the third person of the Godhead,
giving us the courage, guidance and power
to accomplish our mission as witnesses.***

3. The birth, growth and impact of the church.

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together

and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:37-47

What made this new church powerful?

All new believers received the Holy Spirit.

They devoted themselves to understanding their faith.

They devoted themselves to one another. They were family.

They devoted themselves to remembering Jesus.

They devoted themselves to seeking Jesus.

They saw answers to their prayers.

They cared for each other.

People were more important than things.

Their faith found expression in generosity.

They cared for neighbors and strangers.

Their faith found daily expression.

Their faith infiltrated every aspect of their lives.

Neighbors were cared for just like family.

Friends came to faith daily because they wanted to be forgiven of their sins and enjoy what they saw in those house churches.

4. The church grows beyond Jerusalem.

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right... All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Acts 10:34-35 and 43-48

Application: Jesus didn't leave us to carry out the mission alone. He gave us His Holy Spirit to guide and empower us to live as witnesses of Jesus' transforming power in our lives. He has promised to come again, but until then, He has given us His command and it remains in effect until He issues a new one.

"... But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:7-8

We have a mission!

**It starts in our sphere of influence.
We carry it out in partnership.**

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:15-18

“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:35

“New Beginnings!” is seventh in a series titled, “The Story-New Testament-God’s Story of Redemption.” February 8, 2015

All verses are taken from the New International version unless noted.