

HEARTLAND BLENDING CONFERENCE

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS Message One

Continuing to Be Witnesses of the Resurrected and Ascended Christ and Continuing to Be Filled with the Holy Spirit Inwardly and Outwardly

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father is working until now, and I also am working. **Acts 1:8** But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

v. 22 Beginning from the baptism of John until the day on which He was taken up from us, one of these should become a witness of His resurrection with us.

4:33 And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

6:3 But brothers, look for seven well-attested men from among you, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint over this need.

10:39-40 And we are witnesses of all the things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom also they did away with by hanging *Him* on a tree. This One, God raised on the third day; and He has made Him manifest.

13:52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

28:31 Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

- **THE BOOK OF ACTS ACTUALLY HAS NOT ENDED; RATHER, IT HAS BEEN LEFT OPEN SO THAT MORE MAY BE ADDED—28:31:**
 - A. God is always advancing and never stops; if we know this and believe in this, we will praise the Lord—John 5:17; Acts 16:25.
 - B. The book of Acts is a book without an ending because this book is still being continued; although the written record no longer continues after chapter 28, God’s work has been going on—Acts 28:31:
 1. The reason for this must be that the work of the Holy Spirit in preaching Christ for His propagation, multiplication, and spread through the believers of Christ has not yet been completed and needs to be continued for a long period of time—1:8; 2:22-36; 28:30-31.
 2. The evangelical work for Christ’s propagation, multiplication, and spread is according to God’s New Testament economy for the producing of many sons for God, that they might be the members of Christ to constitute His Body for the carrying out of God’s eternal plan and the fulfillment of His eternal will—Rom. 8:29; 12:5; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 3:11.
 - C. If, as living members of Christ, we live by Him and for Him and depend on Him in everything, we will be in the “twenty-ninth chapter” of Acts—John 6:57; 15:4-5; Rom. 14:7-8; 2 Cor. 5:15.

I. IF WE WOULD BE IN THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS, we need to be witnesses of the resurrected Christ—1:8, 22; 2:24, 32; 4:2, 33; 10:39-40; 17:3, 18; 22:14-15; 23:11; 26:16:

- A. In Acts the apostles and disciples were the Lord's witnesses, His martyrs—1:8
- B. The apostles were witnesses of the resurrected Christ, bearing witness of His resurrection—1:22; 3:13-15.
- C. In his narration of the Lord's move on earth, Luke emphasizes the testimony of the Lord's witnesses—4:33; 10:39-40:
 - 1. To be a witness is to testify of one's personal experience of the Lord; in order to testify, we need experiences of seeing, participation, and enjoyment—22:14-15.
 - 2. The apostles were witnesses of the resurrected Christ not in word only but also by their lives and actions—3:1-16.
- D. Paul was an outstanding witness of Christ; he was the kind of witness whom the Lord spoke about in 1:8:
 - 1. The resurrected Christ propagated Himself by coming into Paul and making him a living witness of Christ—22:15.
 - 2. Paul not only preached the propagation of Christ—he lived this Christ—9:21-22; 13:33-34; Phil. 1:20-21a.
 - 3. As one who lived Christ and was a living testimony of Christ, Paul was absolutely different from the Jewish religionists, the Roman politicians, and those in the church in Jerusalem—Acts 21:20-21; 23:14-15; 24:25-26.
- E. Satan could instigate the Jewish religionists and utilize the Gentile politicians to bind the apostles and their evangelical ministry, but he could not bind Christ's living witnesses and their living testimony; the more the Jewish religionists and the Gentile politicians bound the apostles and their evangelical ministry, the stronger and brighter their living testimony became—7:54-60; 28:23-31.

II. IF WE WOULD BE IN THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS, we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit inwardly and outwardly—2:17; 4:8; 6:3; 13:9, 52:

- A. The Scriptures clearly reveal to us that there are two aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit—the inward aspect for life and the outward aspect for power—John 20:22; Eph. 5:18; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8.
- B. Every believer in Christ should experience both aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit, being filled with the Holy Spirit inwardly and outwardly:
 - 1. According to its usage in Acts, *pleroo* denotes the filling of a vessel within, and *pletho* denotes the filling of persons outwardly.
 - 2. The disciples were filled (*pleroo*) inwardly and essentially with the Spirit (13:52) for their Christian living and were filled (*pletho*) outwardly and economically with the Spirit for their Christian ministry (9:17; 13:9).
 - 3. The inward filling Spirit, the essential Spirit, is in the disciples (John 14:17; Rom. 8:11), whereas the outward filling Spirit, the economical Spirit, is upon them (Acts 1:8; 2:17).
 - 4. We all must be filled inwardly with the Holy Spirit as life and be clothed outwardly with the Holy Spirit as power—Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 4:8; 6:3; 13:9, 52.

Message Two

Continuing in the Things in Which We See the Lord and Continuing to Propagate the Resurrected Christ as the Kingdom of God

- **Acts 26:16** But rise up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this *purpose*, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you.

III. IF WE WOULD BE IN THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS, we need to continue in the things in which we have seen the Lord and the things in which the Lord will yet appear to us—26:16:

- A. Paul did not receive the revelation of things without seeing Christ—Gal. 1:15-16:
1. Christ did not reveal things to Paul without Himself as the content of those things; thus, in all the visions Paul saw Christ—Eph. 1:17.
 2. As Paul was on the way to Damascus, Christ revealed certain things to him, and in those things Paul saw Christ—Acts 26:12-16:
 - a. The Lord indicated that He would reveal more things to Paul, and in those things the Lord Himself would appear to him—22:14-15.
 - b. Therefore, what Paul saw was not merely the things themselves but Christ as the One appearing to him in all these things—26:16.
- B. We all need to learn the importance of seeing Christ in the things that are revealed to us in the Word—John 5:39-40; Luke 24:27, 45:
1. We may claim to receive light from the Lord or to see a vision or revelation, but we need to consider whether in the supposed light, vision, or revelation we have seen Christ—Acts 26:16.
 2. The book of Revelation is an excellent illustration of the Lord appearing in the things revealed to the apostle John; he saw a number of visions, but in these visions the Lord Himself appeared to him—Rev. 1:1, 12-13; 5:6; 10:1.
 3. In principle, our experience today should be the same as that of Paul and John.

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- **Acts 1:3** To whom also He presented Himself alive after His suffering by many irrefutable proofs, appearing to them through a *period of forty days* and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God.
 - **28:31** Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

IV. IF WE WOULD BE IN THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS, we need to propagate the resurrected Christ as the kingdom of God—1:3; 8:12; 20:25; 26:18

- A. The kingdom of God is one of the emphases of the book of Acts, which both begins and ends with the kingdom of God—1:3; 28:31; Luke 24: 27, 25.
- B. The kingdom of God is a sphere of life produced by the propagation of the resurrected Christ—4:33; 8:12; 14:22.
- C. The kingdom of God is the propagation of Christ as life to His believers to form a realm in which God rules in His life. The churches are the produce of the resurrected Christ in His ascension; as such, the churches are the kingdom of God—Acts 1:3; 8: 12; 13:1; 2 Cor. 5: 14; Rom. 14: 17.
- Three words are synonyms—*propagation, churches, and kingdom*
- D. The kingdom of God is the reality of the church brought forth by the resurrection life of Christ through the gospel; regeneration is its entrance, and the growth of the divine life within the believers is its development—Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 4:15; John 3:5; 2 Pet. 1:3-11.

- E. To enter into the kingdom of God is to enter into the full enjoyment of Christ as the kingdom, and for this, the souls of the believers need to be established—Acts 14:22.
- F. Our ministry is to propagate the resurrected Christ as God's kingdom; however, every city is the kingdom of the devil, and the whole earth is the kingdom of darkness—19:17-40:
1. Thus, the prevailing ministry for the propagation of Christ is a fighting, a battle, for God's kingdom—Matt. 12:25-29.
 2. Because a battle is raging between God and Satan, we must be certain that whatever we do in our gospel work is absolutely on the side of the kingdom of God and not involved with the kingdom of darkness in any way—Acts 26:18; Col. 1:12-13; Eph. 6:10-12; 2 Cor. 10:3-5.
- G. Paul's proclaiming the kingdom of God was the propagation of the resurrected Christ—Acts 28:23, 31.

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- **Acts 4:33** And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.
 - **11:23** Who, when he arrived and saw the grace of God, rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart.
 - **20:32** And now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified.
 - **Romans 5: 2** Through whom also we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand

V. IF WE WOULD BE IN THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS, we need to continue in the grace of God—4:33; 11:23; 13:43:

- A. Grace is the resurrected Christ becoming the life-giving Spirit to bring the processed God in resurrection into us to be our life and life supply so that we may live in resurrection—1 Cor. 15:10, 45b.
- B. The grace that was seen by Barnabas must have been the Triune God received and enjoyed by the believers and expressed in their salvation, change in life, holy living, and the gifts they exercised in their meetings, all of which could be seen by others—Acts 11:23.
- C. By God's grace Saul of Tarsus, the foremost of sinners, became the foremost apostle laboring more abundantly than all the apostles—1 Tim. 1:15-16; 1 Cor. 15:10:
1. His ministry and living by this grace were an undeniable testimony to Christ's resurrection—Acts 13:33-34, 43; 14:3, 26.
 2. The grace that motivated Paul and operated in him was a living person, the resurrected Christ, the embodiment of God the Father becoming the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, who dwelt in him as his everything— John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:10, 45b.
- D. Paul committed the believers to God and to the word of His grace—14:3; 20:32:
1. The word of God's grace is able to build up the saints; this building up requires the growth in the divine life, and the growth in the divine life needs the nourishment of the divine element and the edification and equipment with the divine knowledge, all of which are supplied by the word of God's abundant grace.
 2. The word of God's grace functions to give us the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified; the divine inheritance is the Triune God Himself with all that He has, all that He has done, and all that He will do for His redeemed people—26:18.

Message Three
Continuing to Live in the Unique Move of God's Economy

- **Acts 26:19b** I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

VI. IF WE WOULD BE IN THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS, we need to continue to be faithful to the vision of God's New Testament economy—Acts 26:19b; Prov. 29:18a:

A. In our reading of the book of Acts, we need to devote our full attention and concentrate our entire being on the vision of God's New Testament economy—Eph. 1:10, 17-23; 3:9-11.

B. God's economy is focused on the all-inclusive Christ as our life, our person, and our everything; this One is the embodiment of the processed Triune God, and He is realized as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, who is within us and upon us; this Spirit is working in us so that we may be brought back directly to Christ to enjoy Him as everything—Col. 2:9; 3:4, 10-11; 1 Cor. 15:45b; John 14:16-17; Acts 1:8.

- C. We need to see the vision of God's New Testament economy—Eph. 1:10; 3:9:
1. In this economy the Triune God became a man in the Son; this means that the accomplishment of God's New Testament economy began with the incarnation of Christ—John 1:14; Col. 2:9.
 2. Through Christ's human living, death, resurrection, and ascension, everything necessary for the accomplishment of God's eternal economy was done—John 6:57a; 1:29; 3:14; 12:24; Luke 24:26, 49-51; Acts 1:1-2.
 3. After breathing the Spirit into the disciples essentially, the Lord, in His ascension, poured out the Spirit upon His Body economically—John 20:22; Acts 1:8.
 4. Now the Triune God as the processed all-inclusive Spirit is both within His chosen people and upon them, and with them He is carrying out the New Testament economy—John 14:16-17; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 5:32.
 5. The Lord is propagating Himself by imparting Himself to His believers to make them living members of His universal Body to be His corporate vessel for His expression—v. 14; John 20:17; Rom. 8:29; 12:4-5; Eph. 4:16; 5:30.
 6. This is the vision that Paul saw, and this is what we need to see today— 1:17-23

- D. **"I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision"**—Acts 26:19b:
1. This was a vision, in which the apostle saw the divine things concerning the dispensing of the Triune God into His chosen, redeemed, and transformed people—2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 1:3-14.
 2. All his preaching in the book of Acts and his writing in his fourteen Epistles, from Romans to Hebrews, are a detailed description of this heavenly vision seen by Paul—Acts 9:4-5, 15; 22:14-15; 26:16.
 3. May we all continue to be faithful to the heavenly vision—the vision of God's New Testament economy—v. 19b; 1 Cor. 4:2.

Song: *What Miracle*

- 1 What miracle! What mystery! That God and man should blended be! God became man to make man God, Untraceable economy! From His good pleasure, heart's desire, His highest goal attained will be.
 - 2 Flesh He became, the first God-man, His pleasure that I God may be; In life and nature I'm God's kind, Though Godhead's His exclusively. His attributes my virtues are; His glorious image shines through me.
 - 3 No longer I alone that live, But God together lives with me. Built with the saints in the Triune God, His universal house we'll be, And His organic Body we For His expression corp'rately.
 - 4 Jerusalem, the ultimate, Of visions the totality; The Triune God, tripartite man – A loving pair eternally – As man yet God they coinhere, A mutual dwelling place to be; God's glory in humanity Shines forth in splendor radiantly!
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- **Acts 2:46-47** And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, they partook of *their* food with exultation and simplicity of heart, praising God and having grace with all the people. And the Lord added together day by day those who were being saved.
- **5:41-42** So they went from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be dishonored on behalf of the Name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and announcing the gospel of Jesus *as* the Christ.
- **8:4** Those therefore who were scattered went throughout *the land* announcing the word as the gospel.
- **13:1-4** Now there were in Antioch, in the local church, prophets and teachers: Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen, the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on *them*, they sent them away. They then, having been sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed away to Cyprus.
- **Ezekiel 1:15-21** And as I watched the living creatures, I saw a wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for *each of* their four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their workmanship were like the sight of beryl. And the four of them had one likeness; that is, their appearance and their workmanship were as it were a wheel within a wheel. Whenever they went, they went in their four directions; they did not turn as they went. As for their rims, they were high and they were awesome; and the rims of the four of them were full of eyes all around. And whenever the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and whenever the living creatures were lifted up above the earth, the wheels were lifted up *also*. Wherever the Spirit was to go, they went—wherever the Spirit was to go. And the wheels were lifted up alongside them, for the Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. Whenever those went, these went; and whenever those stood still, these stood still; and whenever those were lifted up above the earth, the wheels were lifted up alongside them; for the Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

VII. IF WE WOULD BE IN THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS, we need to be one with the Lord in His unique move to deify man by giving Him the “unhindered” way to work Himself into us for the building up of the church as

His Body and to move in us and through us for the spreading of the church as His testimony—Eph. 3:16-19; Acts 1:8; 9:31; 13:1-4; 28:31:

A. In the four Gospels, God moved in Christ singly as a personal vessel; now in the continuation of the book of Acts, “Acts 29,” God is moving in the church as a corporate vessel—4:13, 16; 5:20, 28-39.

B. The move of the apostle Paul and his co-workers in Acts 16 illustrates that we are not merely one *with* the Spirit but that we *and* the Spirit are one—vv. 6-7; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17; cf. John 10:30.

C. We should not take any action apart from the all-inclusive Spirit; the way that we must take today is the way of moving in the move of the Spirit and of having the Spirit moving in our move—Acts 13:9, 52; 17:16; 19:21; Rev. 22:17a.

D. In the book of Ezekiel God’s economy and God’s move in His economy are signified by a wheel; every local church and every individual believer should have a high and awesome wheel with them—1:15, 18; Acts 13:1-4:

1. In ourselves we should be small, but the wheel beside us, that is, the move of God’s economy with us, should be high and awesome.
2. The wheels having the appearance of beryl indicates that wherever the wheel goes, it brings the appearance of the Lord—Ezek. 1:16a; Dan. 10:6.
3. The wheels having the same appearance indicates that the move of the Lord has the same likeness and appearance in every church—Ezek. 1:16b; cf. Rev. 1:12;
4. The wheels going in four directions and not turning as they went indicates a move in coordination—Ezek. 1:17.
5. The high and awesome rims of the wheels being full of eyes indicates that the more we have the move of the Lord, the more we are enlightened and the more we will be able to see—Ezek. 1:18.
6. The wheel within a wheel (v. 16) shows the Lord’s move in our move; the inner wheel, the Lord as the hub, is the source of power for the moving of the outer wheel, the church as the rim—Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:17b, 28-29:
 - a. For Elijah to pray in a prayer means that the Lord’s prayer was within his prayer; this is the wheel within a wheel—James 5:17.
 - b. If our move is genuine, it must be that within our move is the move of the Lord; on the other hand, the wheels following the living creatures indicates that the move of God’s work depends upon our moving in faith—Ezek. 1:19; cf. Eccl. 11:4.
7. The wheels follow the living creatures, and the creatures follow the Spirit, but the Spirit is in the wheels (Ezek. 1:19-21).
 - a. This indicates that we are one with the Lord and that He is one with us.
 - b. The Lord follows us, we follow the Spirit, and the Spirit is in the wheels, indicating that the move of the Lord in our move is in the principle of incarnation.

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- **THE BOOK OF ACTS DOES NOT HAVE AN ENDING, BECAUSE IT IS A RECORD OF THE UNIQUE MOVE OF GOD’S ECONOMY—THE UNIQUE STREAM OF THE WORK OF THE LORD, THE STREAM OF LIFE, WHICH**

IS STILL FLOWING AND NEVER STOPS FLOWING—REV. 22:1, 3B; JOHN 5:17; MATT. 25:21:

- A. The Bible reveals the flowing Triune God—the Father as the fountain of life, the Son as the spring of life, and the Spirit as the river of life—Jer. 2:13; Psa. 36:9a; John 4:14; 7:37-39.
- B. The source of the flow is the throne of God and of the Lamb—Rev. 22:1.
- C. In the Scriptures there is only one flow, only one divine stream, the unique stream of the Lord's work—1 Cor. 16:10; 3:12; cf. Gen. 2:10-14.
- D. The book of Acts reveals that there is only one stream of the move of the Lord and that we need to keep ourselves in this one stream—15:35-41:
1. The flowing of the divine life, which started on the day of Pentecost and has been flowing throughout all generations to this day, is just one stream.
 2. The history of the church shows that throughout the generations there has been one stream of the Spirit flowing all the time; many have been working for the Lord, but not all have been in the flowing of that one stream.
 3. The work in the flowing of the Holy Spirit is not a burden but a rest; the work is easy to do and the burden is easy to bear when it is the processed and consummated God as the Spirit living in us who does the work and bears the burden—Matt. 11:28-30; Phil. 3:3; Rom. 1:9; 1 Cor. 15:10.
 4. We must maintain the flowing of the stream within us by giving the inner flow, the flowing Lord within us, the preeminence—Ezek. 47:1; Col. 1:18b.
 5. What we must do today is to go along with the flowing, the current, of the work of the Holy Spirit; whatever we do must not be according to our natural thought but according to His flowing—*Hymns*, #907

Message Four

Continuing to Live in the Divine History within the Human History for the Spreading and Building Up of the Church as the Corporate Manifestation of Christ

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

vv. 13-14 And when they entered, they went up to the upper room where they were residing, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the brother of James. These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

2:16-18 But this is what is spoken through the prophet Joel: “And it shall be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream things in dreams; And indeed upon My slaves, both men and women, I will pour out of My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy.”

v. 21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

5:20 Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.

vv. 41-42 So they went from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be dishonored on behalf of the Name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and announcing the gospel of Jesus as the Christ.

6:4 But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.

13:32-34 And we announce to you the gospel of the promise made to the fathers, That God has fully fulfilled this promise to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, “You are My Son; this day have I begotten You.” And as to His having raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to corruption, He spoke in this way, “I will give you the holy things of David, the faithful things.”

16:6-7 And they passed through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

17:16 And while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld that the city was full of idols.

19:21 And when these things were fulfilled, Paul purposed in his spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

28:31 Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

I. THE BOOK OF ACTS REVEALS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE DIVINE HISTORY within the human history as the acting God; they have become God in life, in nature, in expression, and in function (but not in the Godhead) for the spreading and building up of the church as the corporate manifestation of Christ—1:8, 14; 2:14a; 4:10-20, 31-32; 5:20, 38-39; 13:1-4; 26:16-19; 28:31:

A. In Peter's first proclamation of the gospel in the book of Acts, he quoted from the book of Joel, which reveals the intrinsic, divine history within the outward, human history—Acts 2:17-21; Joel 1:1-4; 2:28-32.

B. The divine history within the human history is Christ's "goings forth...from the days of eternity" (Micah 5:2) across the bridge of time into eternity future (Psa. 90:2) so that He might be dispensed into His chosen ones as the Desire of all the nations (Hag. 2:7) for His corporate manifestation and His full glorification.

II. THE BOOK OF ACTS REVEALS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE DIVINE HISTORY by calling on the name of the Lord, suffering on behalf of the name of the Lord, and speaking in the name of the Lord, the name of Jesus:

A. Joel's prophecy and its fulfillment concerning God's New Testament jubilee have two aspects: on God's side, He poured out His Spirit in the ascension of the resurrected Christ; on our side, we call on the name of the ascended Lord, who has accomplished all, attained unto all, and obtained all—Acts 2:16-18, 21; Joel 2:28-29, 32a:

1. Our divine history in the midst of human history is a history of calling on the name of the Lord to enjoy the riches of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ as the fullness of Christ—Rom. 10:12-13; Eph. 3:8, 19; 1:22-23.

2. By calling on the name of the Lord, we keep ourselves in God's golden, divine history—a history that begins with Enosh (Gen. 4:26), continues through the Old and New Testaments (*See Acts 2: 21 Note #1*), and concludes with the last prayer in the Bible (Rev. 22:20).

B. As we are living in the divine history, we suffer on behalf of the Lord's name within the human history; it is a real honor to be dishonored on behalf of the Name, the very name of the man-dishonored but God-honored Jesus—Acts 4:18-20, 29-31; 5:41-42; 9:13-16; 2 Cor. 6:4; 11:23; Col. 1:24-25.

C. We carry out the divine history within the human history by speaking "boldly in the name of Jesus"; this name is the expression of the sum total of what the Lord is in His person and work—Acts 9:27; Phil. 2:9-11; 1 Thes. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:5.

III. THE BOOK OF ACTS REVEALS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE DIVINE HISTORY by living, moving, and acting as one Body; they do everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body:

A. After the Lord Jesus died, resurrected, and ascended, He continued to live, act, walk, and work on earth in thousands of people because He imparted Himself into them through His death and resurrection—John 12:24.

B. The four Gospels give us a picture of the Head, and the book of Acts shows us the Body; the book of Acts is actually the acts of Christ by the Spirit in the church as His Body, His reproduction and duplication—1:14; 2:14a, 42; 9:4-5; 28:13-15.

IV. THE BOOK OF ACTS REVEALS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE DIVINE HISTORY by rejecting themselves and living by another life—Christ as the divine life; this corporate living of Christ is the reality of the Body of Christ:

A. The life that is indicated by “this life” in Acts 5:20 is the divine life preached, ministered, and lived by Peter that overcame the Jewish leaders’ persecution, threatening, and imprisonment; Peter’s life and work made the divine life so real and present in his situation that even the angel saw it and pointed it out.

B. Paul lived Christ and served God by the all-inclusive Spirit of Jesus in his spirit (the divine Spirit mingled with his human spirit as one spirit); he lived within the veil (in his spirit as the practical Holy of Holies) and outside the camp (the human organization of religion)—16:6-7; 17:16; 19:21; Rom. 8:16; 2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 1:9; Phil. 3:3; Heb. 6:19-20; 13:13.

C. In order to live in the divine history within the human history and by the divine life in our human life, we need to be vessels open to the Lord, loving Him, receiving Him, being filled with Him, and letting Him be everything to us and do everything in us, through us, and for us—Acts 9:15; 2 Cor. 4:7; Rom. 9:21, 23; cf. 2 Kings 4:1-6.

V. THE BOOK OF ACTS REVEALS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE DIVINE HISTORY by continuing steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word; this is to live in the apostolic ministry in coordination with Christ as our great High Priest in His heavenly ministry—6:4; Heb. 7:25; 8:1-2:

A. By prayer we set our mind on the things above and become a reflection of Christ’s ministry in the heavens; we depend on prayer to do what man cannot do, to understand what man cannot understand, and to speak what man cannot speak—Acts 9:11; 13:1-4; Col. 3:1-3; 4:2; Eph. 6:18; Dan. 6:10; 9:2-3; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Cor. 3:6.

B. By the ministry of the word, we impart Christ into others as the heavenly life and power so that they may be sustained with the riches of Christ to live Christ as their heavenly life on earth—Rom. 15:16; cf. Isa. 50:4-5.

VI. THE BOOK OF ACTS REVEALS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE DIVINE HISTORY seen in Psalm 68, which shows that Christ is the center of God’s move on the earth and the reality of God’s activities through the church—vv. 1, 24:

- We need to dwell in Christ as the “shore” of the evangelists for the transportation and spreading in the preaching of the gospel; on the day of Pentecost at least one hundred twenty gospel “ships,” all of whom were Galileans, set out from the “shore” to spread the gospel—Psa. 68:27; Gen. 49:13; Acts 2:7; 13:31.

VII. THE BOOK OF ACTS REVEALS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE DIVINE HISTORY by continuing to enjoy, live, and proclaim the resurrected Christ as the firstborn Son of God and as the holy things of David, the faithful things, which are all the aspects of what Christ is as mercies to us—vv. 32-34:

- In Acts 13:34 Paul interprets God’s sure mercies in Isaiah 55:3 as “the holy things of David, the faithful things,” and in Acts 13:33 and 35 he indicates that these things are the resurrected Christ Himself as the firstborn Son of God and as the Holy One.

VIII. IF WE WOULD BE IN THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS, we need to continue to live in the divine history by having an upper-room consecration—1:13-14:

- A. At the seashore Peter gave up his job to follow the Lord Jesus, but in the upper room he gave up much more—Matt. 4:18-20; Acts 1:13-14:
 - 1. He stood with the heavenly vision to give up the religion of his forefathers.
 - 2. He gave up his country, his relationship with his neighbors and friends, and his relatives, and he was willing to risk his life.
- B. The kind of consecration that we need today is an upper-room consecration, a consecration in which we pay the price to have our whole being “married” to the heavenly vision—26:19; 1:8; 20:24.
- C. If we pay the price for the heavenly vision, we will “burn the bridges behind us” and will have no way to go backward.
- D. Whether we have seen the heavenly vision or not depends on whether we are willing to pay the price to buy the anointing Spirit as the eye-salve—Rev. 3:18.
- E. To take the way of the Lord’s recovery is not cheap; this way is expensive and requires a costly consecration.
- F. We are not here for a movement but for the Lord’s recovery, and the recovery can be carried out only by the specific and extraordinary consecration in the upper room.
- G. The one hundred twenty in the upper room all became a burnt offering; they were burning for the Lord in spirit, and they burned others with the divine fire of the divine life—Luke 12:49-50; Acts 2:3-4; Rom. 12:11.
- H. When the Lord Jesus was on the earth, great crowds followed Him, but they did not afford Him anything for His move; His move was with those in the upper room, with those whose eyes had been opened and whose hearts had been touched—Acts 17:6b.
- I. It is a small number who will turn the world and change the age; if we would be in the upper room, we need to pray in a specific way and say, **“Lord, I am willing to be in the upper room for the recovery of Your testimony.”**