

THE BOOK OF ACTS: THE WORK AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

January 6, 2013

1. Introduction; Great Commission Restated

Acts 1:1-8

1. Happy New Year (2013) to all of you! As we begin anew on a new slate for the year 2013, the Lord has laid on my heart to start this year with a sermon series entitled “THE WORK AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH” using the Book of Acts. As we introduce this series in this first sermon we shall focus on the Great Commission Restated.
2. The great commission and the greatest commandment are keys to the success of the work and growth of the church. Consequently, obedience to the great commission accompanied with that to the greatest commandment always result in healthy church growth. This is why Jesus gave His followers these two injunctions to build and growth the church. The great commission is “Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20). The greatest commandment is found in Matthew 22:35-40: “One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” 37 Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’[Deut. 6:5]. 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’[Deut. 6:5]. 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments”.
3. In Acts 1:8 Jesus restated the great commission in a different way as:” 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”. Dr. Luke wrote the Book of Acts as a story to document the men and women who took this great commission seriously to spread the news of the risen Savior to the remote parts of the world. Each section of the Book of Acts focuses on a particular audience, a key personality, and a significant phase in the expansion of the Gospel message. Section one (Acts 1-7) focuses on the Jerusalem and all Judea phase of witnessing with Peter overseeing it; while the Samaria segment (Acts 8-12) has Philip as the main person with Peter coming to assist. The last section (Acts 13-28) focuses on the gospel reaching the rest of the world with Paul as the main messenger. However, while the Apostles are mentioned individually and collectively at several points the Book of Acts broadly records the acts of Peter (Acts 1-12) and Paul (Acts 13-28).
4. As we begin this sermon series THE WORK AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH using the Book of Acts let us focus today on the introduction that culminates with the restating of the great commission. Thus our text for today reads, “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” 6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at

this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 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 1:1-8).

5. Mt Traveler members, as we conclude this sermon series please allow me to summarize as follows. The work and healthy growth of the church involves:
- Knowing and accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and savior
 - Obeying the great commission and the greatest commandment.
 - Prayers until you receive the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
 - Christians/believers actively engaging in witnessing with the following strategy:
 - o First begin in your Jerusalem and in all your Judea (immediate locality/environs – “FRANsgelism” that focuses on friends, relatives, associates and neighbors).
 - o Next is all your Samaria (all those you are prejudice towards in your proximity)
 - o Finally to the ends of the earth (to everyone everywhere)
 - And let the church say, “Amen!”
6. To become a witness for Christ, you have to know Him as your personal Lord and savior. The questions to answer on this first Sunday of this New Year 2013 are: Do you know Him and is He your personal Lord and savior? Also, are you obeying the great commission and the greatest commandment He gave believers (the church)? If not, we invite you to come, repent, and humbly accept Jesus Christ into your heart and life by faith. I hope He will find room in your heart today! Then confess with your mouth your faith in Him that He died and rose again to save you from your sin through the shedding of His blood on Calvary, and you will be saved as well as become part of God’s family and kingdom. Then ask Him in prayers to empower you with the Holy Spirit so that you can be His witness. May God bless you as you humbly open your heart to provide Him room as you accept Him as your Lord and savior while the Praise Team leads us in a song?

If you are reading this on the Internet why don’t you pray asking Jesus Christ to be your Lord and savior, then write us at pastordatiri@mttraveler.org? If you are a child of God and this message has blessed or a help to you, write and tell us also.

Mt. Traveler Missionary Baptist Church, Waverly, Alabama
Synopsis of Sermon Preached by Rev. Chris Johns, Youth Minister

THE BOOK OF ACTS: THE WORK AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

January 13, 2012

2. Jesus Ascension and the Upper Room Prayer Meeting

Acts 1:9-14

Intro: Broken down on my journey. Do you believe in Jesus the Christ?

1. Will God come through in my circumstances?
 1. He wants us to listen to his instruction. Love
 2. Stay away from sin. Don’t greave or quench the Holy Spirit. Cast sin aside.
 3. Be Spirit filled and walk by faith not sight

4. Always praying.
 1. Prayers of the righteous availeth much
5. God wants us to trust his plan of salvation and understand the body of Christ. His commandments are not grievous. Husbands love your wife as Christ love the church. Wives be submissive and obedient to your husband. If he is a non believer you can win him over. Give our first fruits to him (Explain the concept of tithes and all needs are met in church through tithes/offering). We must remain in the true vine outside of the true vine we are dead/lost. We are pruned to become more fruitful. We are not thrown away children. We are ambassadors for Christ and we serve a God who knows our struggles. He came down as a slave servant and died on the cross.
6. Christ Ascended back to heaven and he told the disciples to return back to Jerusalem and wait on the comforter. Are you waiting on God in your life? Are you trying to move ahead of him? When we walk with God we have peace, joy, patience, long suffering, & meekness. When we don't walk with God we have the wrong attitude toward one another and the work of the church. We never get in the game but we tell the players how to hit the ball, run the bases, distribute the water, and tell the coach (pastor) which plays he should run While the whole time we are eating a hotdog in the stand as a spectator. Get involved in the ministry that God has placed on your heart (Example: Peter rabbit & Tambourine).

Conclusion: The truth of the Gospel. Death and resurrection of Christ

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Mt. Traveler Missionary Baptist Church, Waverly, Alabama
Synopsis of Sermon Preached by Rev. B. C. Datiri, Pastor

THE BOOK OF ACTS: THE WORK AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

January 20, 2013

3. The Choice of Matthias – (Text: Acts 1:15-26

Acts 1:12-26

1. As we continue with the sermon series entitled “THE WORK AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH” using the Book of Acts let me reiterate that the main goal is to know the heart and mind of God so as to do the work of the church and bring about a healthy church growth. After Jesus resurrection and before His ascension, He restated the Great Commission and the promised coming of the Holy Spirit to empower the apostles (believers) to accomplish the tasks of the work and growth of the church. Then He asked them to tarry in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit before the venture out to be His witnesses. At His ascension, Angels promised also that this Jesus will return in the same manner as

the believers saw Him go into heaven. The believers went back to Jerusalem and tarried in the Upper Room in prayers for the coming of the promised Holy Spirit. While they were waiting they chose Matthias to replace Judas Iscariot who had betrayed Jesus and afterward committed suicide. Prior to choosing Matthias the believers first prayed to know the heart and mind of God about this matter.

2. Thus our text for today reads, “Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. 15 In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) 16 and said, “Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. 17 He was one in our number and shared in our ministry.” 18 (With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. 19 Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 “For,” said Peter, “it is written in the Book of Psalms: ‘May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it [Psalm 69:25],’ and, ‘May another take his place of leadership [Psalm 109:8].’ 21 Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, 22 beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.” 23 So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen 25 to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” 26 Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles” (Acts 1:12-26).
3. Mt Traveler members, as we conclude this sermon series please allow me to summarize as follows. The work and healthy growth of the church involves:
 - Knowing and accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and savior
 - Obeying the great commission and the greatest commandment.
 - Prayers until you receive the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
 - Choosing leaders that would become active in witnessing for Jesus. Such leaders must first be believers:
 - Who have walked with Jesus not just for awhile but for a good while with Him.
 - Who are respected by other believers
 - Chosen by the majority of believers after fervent prayers
 - And let the church say, “Amen!”
4. To become a leader and a great witness for Jesus Christ, you must first know Him as your personal Lord and savior. If you are not, we invite you to come, repent, and humbly accept Jesus Christ into your heart and life by faith. I hope He will find room in your heart today! Then confess with your mouth your faith in Him that He died and rose again to save you from your sin through the shedding of His blood on Calvary, and you will be saved as well as become part of God’s family and kingdom. Then ask Him in prayers to empower you with the Holy Spirit so that you can be His witness. May God bless you as

you humbly open your heart to provide room for Him as Choir leads us in a song!

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**Mt. Traveler Missionary Baptist Church, Waverly, Alabama
Synopsis of Sermon Preached by Rev. R. D. Jacobs, Evangelist**

THE BOOK OF ACTS: THE WORK AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

January 27, 2013

4. The Coming of the Holy Spirit and the Crowds Response

Acts 2:1-13

The way the Church is to Grow and the way it is to Work is found in the Lord's Great Commandment and Commission. The Great Commandment is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'". (Matthew 22:36-40) The Great Commission is "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you". (Matthew 28:16-20) The Growth and the Work of the Church must be done through Love and the Power of the Holy Spirit.

It is God's desire that the Church, His Body in the earth, would continue to Work and Grow by obeying and doing his Great Commandment and Commission. It is God's desire that His Church would know His Heart, Mind and Will! If we, the church, could know the Heart, Mind and Will of God we would know our Mission, Purpose, and Vision. To know the Will of God is to know His intention, desires, plan goal and mission for His Church. To know the Heart of God is to know His emotion, soul, spirit, His focus and core purpose of His Church. And, to know the Mind of God is to know His thoughts, and how he see's and envisions He Church's responsibility.

Each Church should gather behind God's Purpose, Mission and Vision. The Church should be united behind God's Will, Mind and Heart. When the Church unites there will be unity. God is not a God of Confusion, havoc, disarray, chaos, or things being out of their normal place or relationship, God is a God of unity and oneness. And he desires His Church to be the same. The Book of Acts says that on the Day of Pentecost, the church were all together in one place and in one accord. (Acts 2:1) Pentecost was a festival that all Jews returned to Jerusalem to worship and the Bible says they were all together in one accord.

The Bible says that while they were in the place together they heard a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:2-4) At this worship experience together, the Holy Ghost was present and led the Worship! All of those who had gathered together from various locations were able to be in one accord. And God desires that his Church, His Body, be one and unite behind His Mission Purpose and Vision.

The Bible lets us know that there was no confusion in this worship service, because every man

heard them speak in their own language the Wonderful Works of God. (Acts 2:6) Each heard clearly God speaking to them. With the uniting and bonding Power of Love and the Holy Spirit, the atmosphere was set for the Church to Work and Grow as Peter would preach and 3000 would be added to the Church on this day. A beautiful example that it will take the uniting Power of Love and The Holy Spirit for Christ's Body to continue His Work and Grow. When we each seek the Heart, Mind and to do the Will of God we will fulfill His Purpose, Mission and Vision.

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