

May 29th, 2016
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: Acts Men:

Sermon #1 Title: Understanding the Cause of the King

Sermon #1 Text: (Acts 1:1-8)

I heard a story once about a man who was watching construction workers build a castle. As he noticed this happening each day, curiosity got the better of him, and so one day he stopped as he walked by the job site. He walked up to a man and asked him politely, "Sir, what are you doing here?" To which the man replied rather bluntly, "I'm laying brick, can you not see that?" and then he turned and went back to his labor. He walked on and asked the next man he came to, and said, "Excuse me, sir, but what are you doing here?" – The man replied, "Well, I'm trying to make a living, but people keep interrupting me." Excusing himself, the man then went on further, and made inquiry with another man, who said, "Don't you know? I am helping the King build his castle!"

- To the first man, he was doing nothing more than laboring through bricks, the second man was doing nothing more than trying to make his own life better . . . but the third man knew and understood, that he was doing the Work of the King!

- There are multitudes of Christians who have no idea what they are doing.

- Some are doing nothing more than just what is before them.

- Some are doing what they do for their own benefit.
- Some, are working for the King.

- To add to that, there are manifold more multitudes of lost people who have no idea what Christians are up to either.

- To many in the world, all we do is . . .
 - 1.) try to force our values on everyone else . . .
 - 2.) try to focus our energies being better than everyone else . . .
 - 3.) try to make this world a better place to live . . .

The Bible makes clear every aspect of Christianity.

- The Lord makes clear what our Walk of the Christian is to look like.
- The Lord makes clear what the Words of the Christian are to sound like.
- The Lord makes clear what the Will of the Christian is to be like.
- The Lord makes clear what WORK the Christian is to do.

It is wonderful to know the Heaven that Jesus Calls us To
 It is wonderful to know the Freedom that Jesus Calls us To
 It is wonderful to know the Grace and Glory that Jesus Calls us To.

- It is Imperative for us to know the WORK that Jesus Calls us to do!

- Cornelius was a soldier

- All of these were people who had healthy employments and were respected citizens . . . but those things were not the central attention of their lives! – Jesus was.

B. Their Submission to Jesus

- 1.) With Patience
 - a.) - vs 12, they did as they were told
- 2.) For His Promise
 - b.) – they wound up waiting a week and a half, 10 days, before at the Feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit of God filled them with power to carry on the work of God.

III. The Stated Function of the Believer – vs 8

A. To Do the Work of Jesus in the World of Men

- 1.) It is to be Your Will
- 2.) It is to be your Walk
- 3.) It is to be Your Work

This was to be the work of the institution of the Church!

- It wasn't meant for them as individuals – it was not possible for them to go through the entire world.
- It was meant for those men, to teach other men, that all men, were to engage in the Lord's work to conquer the world by preaching, teaching, and witnessing.

As we close – Are you man #1 – just laying the brick in front of you, through the drudgery of the day? Man #2 – working for your own benefit, hoping that you do enough? Man #3 – Helping the King do His Kingly Work.

II. The Devoted Following of the Believer – vs 4-7

*Note – It is seen in two places in these 3 verses

A. Their Attention to Jesus

- There was no other place to be than with the risen Lord – “Their attendance with Him” displays their “Attention on Him.”
- “Being assembled together with them”

(Listen to me believer – let’s talk about church attendance for a minute.

- Do you realize that the issue is not giving your attendance to the church – but it is always about the attention of your life being focused on the Lord!

- When the Lord Jesus, is the Focus of your Life, (Not your mind, but your life and lifestyle) – your assembling together will take care of itself.

Some people have the erroneous idea that I don’t need church to be in fellowship with the Lord! – That’s not your call!

- When your attention is on Him, you’ll want to be where He is, and He is the head of the church, this is His house, this is His body, - there is no such thing as being right with the Lord, and defiant toward the church.

Now these believers, set the central attention of their life on Jesus!

(This may shock you, but we aren’t talking about everyone of them walked away from their jobs and careersthat’s not true.

- Lydia – was business woman
- Luke – was a physician
- Priscilla and Acquilla ran a family owned business

This morning, we are going to begin to spend our summer together learning that not only do we have Words to Teach, but we have Work to do . . . it is Biblical, and not Optional.

We are going to try cut through the centuries of variations, corruptions, addendums, and subtractions, all the way back to the end of Christ’s ministry on earth, and the beginning of Church Work on earth, and gain an industrial strength understanding of what we are to be doing here!

We are going to look to the first church and churches, and ask for the Lord to help us regain, refresh, and renew what He has intended for us to be!

We do that by going to the book of Acts!

- It is the Biblical record of
 - 1.) The history of the Lord’s Churches
 - 2.) The purpose of the Lord’s Churches
 - 3.) The people of the Lord’s Churches
 - 4.) The power of the Lord’s Churches
 - 5.) The Function of the Lord’s Churches

Acts is the blueprint, and roadmap for a clear understanding of the Lord’s churches.

(Never get the idea that the “Church” is man-made idea – We do not get our understanding of the “church” from the culture, we get it straight from the scripture.)

1.) Would you agree with this? – If you are a believer, you need to know what it is that Jesus wants you to know.

- This is the heart and example of the book of Acts.

2.) One prima fascia way to know that a church needs the Lord to refresh it, renew it, and revive it, is when it has no idea that it needs to be refreshed, renewed, and revived.

As we begin this study, we must recognize one straightforward fact. – Refreshing, Renewing, and Reviving does not come when Everyone gets excited about what Jesus does – but when everyone gets serious about what Jesus says.

Acts 1:1-8

- It is the historical record of the instructions and example of the work that Jesus expected of His apostles and saints after He ascended to heaven.

- It is written by the gospel writer Luke the beloved Physician
- and it is a “continuation” of the gospel ministry after Jesus rose from the dead, walked on earth for 40 days, and then ascended to heaven.

- Luke wrote this history sometime in the early 60’s AD.

- We begin where Luke began.

- He picks up where he left off writing the gospel. This is a written record given and entrusted to a man named “Theophilus.”

- his name means “friend of God”

Now that being said, “All instructions” pertaining to what to do and what to teach, find their fountainhead in the heart, mind, and mouth of the Lord Jesus.

C. The Mastery of Jesus

1.) verse 2 – “After He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen.”

a.) Here is the first test of their focus . .

*Note – The commandment recorded by Luke here would test the focus of their life . . .

b.) Verse 4 – “that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father.”

*Note – There was no room for distractions, and double lives in that instruction.

1.) Don’t leave, don’t go home, stay in Jerusalem.

2.) Wait for not many days.

*Note – Jesus expected to be the Focus of their lives, their will, their time, their talents and their treasure.

(Now this is in stark contrast to what happened after the Jesus revealed Himself to Thomas in the upper room.) – When Jesus disappeared, John tells us that Peter said, “Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing . . .”

How Wonderful! – Jesus is alive! We are saved, it’s a great day to be alive, Hallelujah, let’s get back to work!

But that was the night they fished and caught nothing, and then Jesus told them to fish on the other side of the boat, and they caught nearly everything.

From that point forward there was no other focus in their lives!

(As far as man reaches, and as far as sin reigns, the people in the world live “out of God’s control.” – It is the work of Jesus for them to willfully, come under His control, and live within His kingdom!

- Titus 2:14 – “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

- Luke 16:16 – “The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.”

- Jesus is “building a Kingdom” of people who willingly live under Him.

- Jesus is Building the institution of His church! – His Assembly!

- Some people think that “the church” is all of the saved people of all time – it is not. – It is an Assembly of People who are members together in one covenant and one accord.

- Matthew 16:18 – “I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

- Now this is the work that Jesus came to do – “to build His kingdom, to build His church.”

- Luke also says here that he write of what Jesus began to “do” and “teach.”

In the context of the book, He taught them, the Apostles:

- 1.) How to do His Work
- 2.) How to teach other men to do His Work

- in the gospel he calls him “Most Excellent Theophilus” and sets out to set the historical record straight concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:3-4 – “It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”

- Theophilus was obviously a trusted friend of Luke and an interested disciple of the Lord Jesus.

- (1 – He had been instructed in Jesus – according to Luke 1.

- (2 – He was obviously interested in Jesus for Luke to write him two letters certifying the history of the ministry of Jesus.)

- Without putting words into the scripture, or stretching things too far, it wouldn’t be out of the question to say that this History of Jesus and His churches, were issues that Theophilus was willing to learn about.

In these first 8 verses, we find three primary patterns for all believers to examine, that are unadulterated, and untainted by history.

I. The Expected Focus of the Believer – vs 1-3

In both Luke and Acts, Luke makes no attempt or plea for Theophilus to turn his attention to the things concerning Jesus, He begins with the expectation that Theophilus desires to know the truth!

(It ought to be a fundamental desire of people who know the Lord, to know more and more about the Lord.)

- In Philippians 3 the Apostle Paul summed up the desire of the right minded Christian in a nutshell when he said, "I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection."

- David said in Psalm 1 of the Blessed man that "His delight is in the law of the Lord." Paul's expression in Philippians was the NT version that summed up his "delight is in the Lord of the law . . ."

(Now notice three things here that is the expected focus of the believer:)

A. The Man Jesus – "Of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach."

- 1.) He does not refer to Him as "Christ Jesus" – though He is.
- 2.) He does not refer to Him as "Lord Jesus" – though He is.
- 3.) He does not refer to Him as "Jesus of Nazareth" – Though He is.
- 4.) He refers to Him in His most critical form - just as Jesus, the man.

The man Jesus is to be the primary interest, and sole object of faith in the heart and mind of every believer.

- All of our history begins with "The man" Jesus.
 - It is the "man" Jesus that said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

1st Timothy 2:5- "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

Jesus is the Man of Heaven, and the Man of History, and He is to be the primary focus of every believer!

B. The Ministry of Jesus – "of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach . . ."

1.) What Jesus did and said.

When all is said and done, the question of your life will be what was said and what was done!

a.) I don't want to over simplify the ministry of Jesus, but apart from Jesus doing and saying, you have no idea what to be doing or saying preparing for the day when all is said and done, and then done and said.

2.) When Dr. Luke speaks of what Jesus began to "do" and "teach" he was speaking of the Work of Christ and the Words of Christ.

(Don't get the idea here that when Luke speaks of what Jesus began to do, he is speaking of all the miraculous things that he did . . . rather he is speaking of "The Kingdom" Jesus came to build.)

What did Jesus come to do?

Luke 19:10 – "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Matthew, Mark and Luke explain to us that Jesus went all about Galilee, "Preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God."

May I say it to you this way, that the primary work of Jesus is to bring people under His control!