

**5.04.22 ~ Wednesday Night Bible Study**  
**HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, Acts 1:1-11**

**Read Acts 1:1-5... What former book? (cf. Luke 24:44-53)**

Jesus made at least 10 different appearances, during the 40-day period between His resurrection and His ascension back into heaven, we studied those on the last two Wednesday nights. If you need a copy of that study, let me know.

John the baptizer (see **Mark 1:4-5**) called people to confess their sins and repent, to be publicly immersed in water, so as to identify with their need for forgiveness, basically saying, "God help me, I'm a sinner!"

John (see **Mark 1:8**) contrasts his water baptism with that of the Messiah's spiritual baptism through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus called people to acknowledge the God's presence among them, believing and confessing Christ as the Savior, the One providing forgiveness for sins.

Spiritual baptism is an immersion into the spiritual Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit Who purges and purifies our soul, setting us apart as God's children when we confess our sins believing in Jesus Christ (see **John 1:12-13; Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 10:9-10; 1Corinthians 12:13**).

There is only one spiritual baptism among believers (**Ephesians 4:5-6**), "There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism." At salvation we are spiritually, divinely, and eternally placed into the Body of Christ, of which (**Colossians 1:17**), "He [Christ] is the head of the body, the church."

**Read Acts 1:6-11...** Jesus' followers wanted Christ to rule over Israel now; Jesus tells them the kingdom will come, but before it does, the gospel message of forgiveness and salvation will be preached to all the world; it is purpose of Christians to testify to the Truth of God's provision of forgiveness and eternal life through Christ.

The power and presence of God came to the followers of Christ at Pentecost (**Acts 2**), so that until He returns to earth, His followers might serve as witnesses of God's divine power, presence, mercy, and grace (see **John 14:15-17, 25-27; 16:14-15**).

**Matthew 28:16-20** tells us some important attributes Christians should have:  
**verse 16 - be available** [being where He told them to be]  
**verse 17 - be worshipful** [honoring Him internally and externally]  
**verse 18 - be submissive** [following Him]  
**verse 19 - be obedient** [exemplifying Him]

In **Matthew 28:19**, the phrase *make disciples* [*matheteuo*] is the main verb and command, it means *to make believers, followers, and learners of Christ*.

Genuine belief in Jesus Christ brings immediate **salvation** (from death to life), immediate **discipleship** (in believing, following, and learning from God's Word), and immediate spiritual **baptism** (a relationship immersed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit).

In **Matthew 28:19**, we are to be **going** [to unbelievers] because they aren't coming to us. We are to **baptize** [*immerse*] them [1. Immerse them in water, as an identification with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. 2. Immerse them in everything the Bible teaches about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.]

We are to **teach** [equip, encourage, exhort] them **to observe** [know and obey] all that is revealed in the Word of God.

**2Timothy 2:15**, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."

**2Timothy 3:16-17**, "All Scripture is inspired by God [God-breathed] and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

True repentance that brings salvation devotes itself to obey God's Word, honor God the Father, exemplify the life of God the Son, walking the power and wisdom of God the Holy Spirit, as we reach out with the Love of Christ to all who will listen.

- **Prayer:** Probably the most difficult of all our spiritual exercise, it embraces the kingdom of God and the people of God. It is hard work to pray on behalf of God's will and God's people in accordance with God's Word, for God's plan and purpose through Christ to be accomplished. There are no "Me's" or "My's" in the Lord's prayer (see **Matthew 6:9-13**).
- **Worship:** He alone is worthy! We praise Him with all that we have and all that we are that we bow before Him then stand and serve Him (see **Matthew 22:37-40**, The Greatest Commandment).
- **Evangelism:** Living as light and salt in this dark and decaying generation, we purpose to live for Christ by our walk and words, that others might come to know Him (see **Matthew 5:13-16**).
- **Teaching/Training:** Proclaiming God's Word accurately, completely, understandably, and authoritatively, we seek to live out our Christianity, while encouraging other believers to grow and mature in Christ (see **Colossians 3:16-17**).

**1John 2:3-6**, "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked."

God's Word tells us Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives, and it says He will return to the Mount of Olives at His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming (see **Zechariah 14:4**); in some ways His return will be similar to His departure, in some ways it will be quite different (see **Revelation 1:7; 19:11-16**).

The Acts of the Apostles is a historic journey of the first Disciples, the first witnesses who believed and trusted in Jesus Christ as God's Son, Lord and Savior.

Like those first witnesses, we ought to commit to study, understand, and apply God's Word, as we encourage one another to do the same, seeking to live out our faith, in unity, as one body, going, making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything God has commanded us.

*Pastor Mike*  
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