

Title: Christ's Mandate for Christians

Passage: Acts 1:1-11

Application:

- Be intentional and faithful in sharing Jesus with others.
- Be dependent upon the God's Spirit and be in His Word.
- Remember Jesus is King.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
 - How can you be more intentional in sharing about Jesus to those around you or even beyond your social circle?
 - How may the fact that Jesus is King change your perspective in the New Year?
 - What next steps will you take in response to the sermon?
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Introduction

Accidental vs. intentional witnessing

- accidental: we await someone to ask us about our faith in Christ
- Intentional: we are called to be an intentional witness for Christ.
 - Takes discipline

Intentional witnessing

- When you share Christ with others, your life will be enriched by Christ.
- Be encouraged and find joy when do what Christ asks us to do.

Philemon 1:6

and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.

Passage:

Acts 1:1-14

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

EXPOSITION

Acts 1:1-2

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.

- context of Book of Acts
- Luke had previously written the Gospel and wrote another book (Acts) to write a historical recap of what happened.

Acts 1:3-5

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And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

- Jesus taught about two things:
 - Kingdom of God
 - Empowerment of the Holy Spirit
- Holy Spirit
 - Previously: given only to kings, prophets, or specific tasks.

- New Empowerment: the Holy Spirit changes the heart and dwells within Christians.

John 3:5

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

- You cannot believe in Christ unless you have the Spirit of God within you.
- Faith in Christ is proof of the Spirit's presence as otherwise you would be spiritually dead.

Titus 3:5

he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

Romans 8:9

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

Ephesians 1:13

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,

Disciples' question

Acts 1:6

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

- The disciples were thinking of Jesus establishing an earthly kingdom that would overthrow Rome.
- Similarly: we also view the injustice occurring around us and want Jesus to come and finally establish His kingdom on earth.

Jesus' response

Acts 1:7-8

He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

- Jesus doesn't rebuke them.
 - There will be a time when there will be a restored physical kingdom.

- But it is not for us to know the specifics.

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses

- Kingdom of God is focused first on spiritual heart change.
 - Hearts will be changed through the Holy Spirit.
- We are first called to be witnesses for Christ

“You will receive power”

- Power = “dynamis” = explosive, life-changing dynamic
- When you are empowered by the Holy Spirit, you have this life changing power within you.
- The power of God is beyond anything we can humanly experience.

2 Timothy 1:7

for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

“You will be my witnesses”

- Witness = one who knows.
 - Sharing out of one’s personal experience and knowledge
- We speak as to what we have seen and heard.
 - Not create our own story or truths
 - But what God has done.

John 9:25b

One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.

- Share of how you were blind and what God has done.
- We are to simply to sow seeds, let the seed do the work.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

Revelation 12:11

And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

- we defeat Satan and demons by our testimony.

"in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

- we are to witness to people of different backgrounds and ethnicity's.
 - Not just a small, limited circle.

Motivation (v.9-11)

Acts 1:9-11

And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

- What's the motivation to be a witness?
 - Jesus will come back and call us to account
 - He will reward you.

Revelation 22:12

Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

APPLICATIONS

Be mindful of temptations we face:

Temptation: Idleness

- We often are tempted by idleness and our own comfort
- Fear people more than fear God.
- Forget that I don't have an option to not share Jesus with others. Forget that Jesus has the antidote for people's sin.

Instead: Be faithful in sharing with others. Be intentional

- ask God to open ways to share the Gospel this week with those you interact with his week.
- Start praying more for those interactions.
- Who?
 - Co-workers
 - Neighbors
- Ask oneself: How can I encourage them to look to eternal life?

Temptation: Thinking doing the Lord's work in the world's way.

- Only the Holy Spirit can change hearts.
- We must pray as we fight for spiritual heart change.

Temptation: We find security in other things besides the Holy Spirit.

- ***Instead: be dependent upon the God's Spirit.***
- Be in God's Word so it can transform you.
- Contrast: direct correlation with lack of reading God's Word and a life of sin.

Remember Jesus is King

- Jesus is on the throne.

Romans 8:34

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

- He is sovereign over all. He is always good.
- Remember you have a good Father who is in control of all things. Do not despair but have hope.
- Don't let your emotions rule your life but rather His Word.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.