

Mission Possible (Acts 1:1-11) Café Church - 10-Sept-17

To begin the Service: 1 Corinthians 2:18-22

¹⁸ But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.” ¹⁹ For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silas and Timothy—was not “Yes” and “No,” but in him it has always been “Yes.” ²⁰ For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God. ²¹ Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²² set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

There are Bibles on the table in front of you

And a sermon outline

And some questions

Let me pray first...

Recap

[PowerPoint 1-Recap]

Before we start - let's recap where we got to last week

Recap

- Jesus has risen from the dead
- There have been over 500 eye witnesses to the Risen Jesus (1 Corinthians 15)
- Without Jesus' resurrection – our faith and our own resurrection is hopeless
- The Risen Jesus requires us to believe in Him and *know* Him – not *know about* Him

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Context (vv1-3)

So we pick up the story in the Book of Acts

[Powerpoint 2-Context]

Acts is short for the Acts (actions_ of the Apostles)

In other words what did the Apostles do once Jesus rose from the dead?

Chapter 1 of Acts gives us there job description and the context

V1 - tells us something about the author

He has written another book - He says "in more former book"

The author is Luke (a doctor) - see Luke 1:1-4

And he's writing to a man called Theophilus

No details of who he is

Could have been someone who commissioned Luke to write the books

Especially if we read Luke 1:1-4

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, ²just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. ³With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

The name Theophilus means "God-Lover" - so it could just be a generic name - to say "I am writing this book to all those who are lovers of God"

And look says in his first book he wrote all about what Jesus did and what Jesus taught - right up to this point we reach tonight in the passage

And Luke says in v2 that Jesus gave the apostles some instructions

See Matthew 28:16-20:

¹⁶Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

So they have a job to do - it implies Jesus is not going to be with them anymore
Which is why in verse 2 - Luke says - "until the day he was taken up to Heaven"
That's what Luke's going to describe in a minute

But before that Luke presents some more evidence about the Risen Jesus

See v3

Jesus proved he is alive

He appeared to many people over the course of 40 days - almost 6 weeks

Promise of Holy Spirit (vv4-8)

[Powerpoint 3-Promised Spirit]

On one of the occasions that the Risen Jesus was with them - v4

He gave them strict instructions not to leave Jerusalem

Until they receive a gift from God - the Father

A gift that Jesus has promised before

See Luke 24:49 - Lookup

And John 14:16 - Lookup

They are about to receive a new kind of baptism -

John the Baptist had baptized people in water - to repent - and turn back to God

But Jesus promises in a few days they will be baptized with the Holy Spirit

Why do they need the Holy Spirit?

[Open Answer]

Because Jesus promised it

Because they will need help to do the job He has given them

It's the Holy Spirit - that transforms people

And is going to transform them from scared and timid disciples into bold and brave

Apostles proclaiming Jesus

Understandably - the apostles want to know what's going to happen

So in v6 they ask Jesus whether Jesus is going to restore the Kingdom of Israel

It's a reasonable question

Jesus had told them His blood introduced a new covenant - a new way

And they also knew there were prophecies about restoration - Jer 23:1-8; Ezek 36:16-30; 37:21-28

But they are also thinking politically still - thinking Jesus had come to get rid of the Romans and get Israel back

But Jesus' kingdom is heavenly kingdom (John 18:36-Not of this world)

And Jesus' kingdom includes more than just the nation of Israel - it includes Gentiles - non Jews

And Jesus' kingdom is everlasting

Jesus doesn't get mad at their question

He simply says in v7 - they don't need to know God's dates and timings - He is in control and will act when He decides - see Matt 24:36

Instead Jesus says they have a job to do

See v8

Jesus promises them POWER - God's POWER - Incomparable Power we learnt from Ephesians 1 this morning

God's Power will come through His Holy Spirit

This Holy Spirit will give them the Power to be witnesses

Witnesses of what?

[Open for Answers]

Witness of Jesus' death, resurrection and teaching

Witness that Jesus is the only way to be forgiven, to have eternal life - the only way to the Father in Heaven

And they will be witnesses not just in Jerusalem - not just Judea in South Israel - but Samaria in the North - and then on to the ends of the Earth

That's what the book of Acts is all about

How the witnesses to the ends of the Earth

And it obviously worked

Because here we are literally in Australia - the bottom end of the Earth

Ascension (vv9-11)

Once Jesus has made his promise

They have to wait a few days

[Powerpoint 4-Ascension]

In the meantime - Jesus is off to Heaven

See verse 9 - He is taken up into the clouds

That's the ascension

And He is in Heaven right now at the right hand of the Father (also mentioned in Ephesians 1 this morning)

And Jesus intercedes for us

Lookup Romans 8:34

Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

As the apostles watched this amazing event - see v10

Perhaps wondering what next

And perhaps wondering will they ever see Jesus again

See v11 - they are told by 2 men dressed in white (2 angels see John 20:12)

That Jesus will come back the same way He went into Heaven

See 1 Thes 4:13-18

Application

How can we apply this to our lives?

[Powerpoint 5a-App1]

1. The resurrection of Jesus is a true event - witnessed by over 500 people over 6 weeks - so Believe it!

[Powerpoint 5b-App2]

2. The power of the Holy Spirit given to the apostles - is given to every believer - John 3 - and enables us to be brave and bold - and be witnesses of Jesus - it is not just the apostles job - but every believers job to witness - and Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit to enable and equip us - with the words to say - and the people to say it to - so claim the Holy Spirit in your life

[Powerpoint 5c-App3]

3. Jesus will come back the same way he went one day - we don't know when - but He will come back - that means 2 things:
 - a. We have a job to do - to witness - and that job is urgent because we don't want anyone to miss out of eternal life with Jesus - and we don't know how much time we have left before Jesus' returns
 - b. We can have confidence and assurance that our eternal destination is secured (again something we learnt in Ephesians) - so whatever things are going on for us personally - or whatever things are going in the world - which make us uncertain, afraid, insecure - we can be secure in knowing our eternity is already safe in the hands of Jesus - see John 14:1-6

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ²My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴You know the way to the place where I am going.”
⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”
⁶Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Because of the Holy Spirit
We have a Mission that is Possible!

Q & A
Let's pray...