



Many people nowadays have bought the idea that the CHURCH is quite irrelevant. The Christian church is no longer an important part of society. Though the view is absolutely false, I don't blame people for thinking that way. Why? Believers of Jesus have failed to live up to their name as Christians. The church is the most important body in the world today -- far and away beyond every other body -- because whatever happens in the world happens as a result of something that is, or is not, happening in the church. Many Christians go through their days, barely hanging on to their spiritual lives, living in their own weak ways; while beneath the surface, the power of God is ready to break free in their lives.

The Book of Acts is written by Luke, the Physician. The Book of Acts picks up where Luke's Gospel leaves off, recording the early progress of the gospel as Jesus' disciples took it from Jerusalem throughout Judea, Samaria, and the rest of the Mediterranean world. The Book of Acts is a record of power exercised in the midst of persecution against Christians. Luke showed how the life of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit was poured to a sick society through ordinary men and women, very much like you and me. Luke picks up his account in Jerusalem with the closing hours of Jesus' earthly ministry. It is the period between Jesus' resurrection and His ascension into Heaven.

FIVE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES AROUND WHICH TO BUILD THE CHURCH:

The Christian's MESSAGE: Christ is Risen

Acts 1:3 - "During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he PROVED to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God." (NLT)

The end result of all of these appearances was that the apostles came to BELIEVE ABSOLUTELY in the reality of the resurrection of Jesus and that He is the Son of God. That assurance gave them the boldness to preach Christ to the very people who had crucified him. It is a belief in the reality of the resurrection that turned the apostles from being fearful skeptics to bold powerful witnesses. , " He isn't here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying (Matthew 28:6 NLT)." This is why every Christian should declare to people around the world that Jesus has risen and He is the only one who can save us from going to hell. The real God knows we cannot go to heaven without a Savior. Why? He knows how sinful we are. He knows we're having a hard time to live a righteous life so He gave us a Savior to lean on.

The Christian's MIGHT: The Power of the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:4-5 - "4 Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. 5 John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." (NLT)

As a Christian, we should not be leaning on our own skills and intelligence to spread the Gospel of God. Maybe some of you are just like me, we're shy to share Jesus to others. Therefore, we should be dependent on the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us live a godly life (John 16:8-11; Galatians 5:22-23). He gives us spiritual gifts for the edification of believers (1 Corinthians 12:4-7). He empowers us to be witnesses for our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8). We share the word of God to others not because of our CAPABILITIES but because of GOD'S ABILITIES. We can do what God tells us to do for the church not because of our BRAINPOWER but GOD'S POWER.

The Christian's MISSION: Establishment of the Kingdom

Acts 1:6-7 - "6 So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?" 7 He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know."" (NLT)

The disciples were confused about the nature of the kingdom which Jesus had come to establish. Their idea of the Messiah was a soldier who was going to be strong enough to drive out any occupying military forces. In those days, the land was occupied by the Romans. So the Jews were looking for a Messiah who would expel the Romans and set up the earthly kingdom of King David. The disciples expected to reign with Him in this kingdom.

The most important thing I could say about the kingdom of God that would help people make sense out of all the uses is that the basic meaning of the word KINGDOM in the Bible is God's REIGN, not realm or people. The kingdom creates a realm, the kingdom creates a people, but the kingdom of God is not synonymous with its realm or its people (Psalm 103:19). Since God's purpose for the world is to save a people for himself and renew the world for that people, His kingly rule implies a saving and a redeeming activity on their behalf. This is why the coming of the kingdom in the New Testament is called good news.

The Christian's MANDATE: Make Disciples

Acts 1:8 - "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (NLT)

Here the Lord laid down in the clearest possible terms the mandate for those who are to follow Him. The mandate of the church that would dare to call itself New Testament must of necessity be a MISSIONARY Church. How many of you are really seeking to be empowered by the Holy Spirit? Most Christians seem to think they are doing God a favor by showing up to church once a week on Sunday. Jesus said, "You are my witnesses." Witness through your LIFE. A lot of Christians belittle witnessing through their lives. But believe me, it is the most powerful tool of witnessing. Witness through helping others in time of need.

The Christian's MOTIVATION: Jesus is Coming Again

Acts 1:9-11 - "9 After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. 10 As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!" (NLT)

Are you living your life truly believing that Jesus is coming back again? Is your life a testimony that Jesus is coming again? Many Christians live their lives as if God is not coming back again. They have time for workout, they have time for work, they have time to go out of town or country but they can't even do their devotion everyday. The word of the Lord says that no one knows when Jesus is coming back. What if Jesus is coming back today, are you ready? This becomes a compelling motivation in the life of the believer. No one knows when Jesus will come, but everyone must live with the anticipation that he could come during their lifetime.



- 1.) **What energizes your Christian walk?**
 - 2.) **Do you sense the urgency to share the gospel to others, share?**
 - 3.) **How do you share Jesus to others around you?**
- PRAY FOR EACH OTHER IN YOUR GROUP**