

Acts 1:1-11 Revolution, Introduction:

In the last century, Coca-Cola launched a worldwide enterprise.

A) You can go just about anywhere in the world and buy a Coke.

B) They are the world's largest multi-national corporation. **Right behind them is Microsoft.**

1) Go to almost any country and you will discover that although the languages are different,

2) their computers look and work just like, the one you have at home with the familiar Windows programs

Well 2000 years ago in the city of Jerusalem a revolution was birthed that has spanned 20 Centuries has spread to the ends of the earth.

A) This revolution wasn't **financed** by wealthy investors

B) it wasn't **promoted** thru slick advertising campaigns and marketing techniques

1) It wasn't the result of some **Political popularity contest.**

C) It was **Started, influenced and sustained** by the Power of God!

1) The Power of a Resurrected Christ living in and thru the lives of his followers.

Today we are beginning a study in the book of Acts here on Sunday mornings:

A) We are calling this series of studies the Revolution.

Webster defines a revolution as a sudden, radical and pervasive change in society.

B) That is exactly what happened in the book of Acts.

C) The book of Acts Chronicles a group of men and women who under the Power of the HS **who did not leave their world the way that they found it.**

D) They were ordinary people who under the power of the HS did extraordinary things.

1) It was the beginning of a movement that continues to this very day.

It was said of this group of believers Acts **17 that they turned their world upside down.**

Background:

A) The author of Acts was Luke, the only Gentile author of the Bible.

B) Historians tells us that Luke was a Syrian from Antioch .

C) From his exacting use of the Greek language, we know Luke was an intelligent man.

1) We know from Colossians 4:14 that he was a doctor.

D) Many Bible scholars and historians further believe that, since the slaves of wealthy men usually held the position of physician, Luke must have been a slave.

The Book was written to a man named Theophilus:

A) Scholars and historians believe Theophilus was Luke's owner who, following his own conversion to Jesus Christ, freed Luke to travel with the apostle Paul.

B) Time of the writing: Luke probably wrote Acts about A.D. 62-64, toward the end of Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, where the book leaves off.

B) Since there is no mention of the intense persecution launched by Nero in A. D. 64, or of the martyrdom of Paul in about 68, Acts was probably written before these events.

Today we want to look at the first 11 verses:

A) The first 11 verses of chapter one constitute an introduction to the book of Acts.

B) In these verses we see the strategy by which Jesus Christ proposes to Change the world.

C) These verses outline the REVOLUTIONARY CHARACTER of the Church when it is functioning as it was intended to function.

Theme: We don't want to just go to Church we want to be the Church!

Dr. Luke begins with a reference to his already completed work on the life of Christ, which we know as the Gospel of Luke:

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus **began both to do and teach**, 2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,

In the gospel of Luke we have the account of the Incarnation – God becoming Man!

A) Jesus coming to the earth – His teaching His ministry – **The Ultimate work of redemption.**

B) Luke says My Gospel is the account of what Jesus **BEGAN both to do and to teach.**

C) The implication is this – In Luke's 2nd Book – the book of Acts/ He is showing us **the work continues**

1) **Not in His earthly – body – but – He has a new Body – HIS CHURCH.**

D) THE INCARNATION LIVES ON!

In the Gospels we see Jesus ministering in a physical body

E) In the book of Acts He is doing it through the bodies of men and women who are **indwelt** by his life.

1) This would be the **Revolutionary Strategy** of Jesus –

F) Him revealing His life – thru His Followers !

1) **Not Acts of the Apostles – But Acts of Jesus**

That strategy is really underscored in the Unique writing style of Dr. Luke. { Speaks of Inspiration

A) The narrative of Acts reveals that men are merely instruments in the hands of the Lord – **His work**

B) The story focuses on **One person** that God is working thru at a particular time or moment

1) Then **abruptly switches** to a new Character – some instances the previous Character isn't heard from again

C) If Acts had been written solely by Luke (apart from the Holy Spirit), do you think that he would have said nothing about the majority of the twelve apostles?

D) Do you think that he would have treated his main characters as he did?

1) **Peter**, the most prominent apostle, slips out of the narrative **without a word** after chapter 15.

E) **James**, another of the inner circle with Jesus, is mentioned only in the list in 1:13,

1)and then in one verse when he is martyred (12:2).

John, the other inner circle apostle, is only referred to in the **first four chapters**, once in chapter 8, and then in reference to his brother's martyrdom, and he passes from the scene in Acts.

Barnabas, who pioneers the first Gentile church in Antioch and who goes with Paul on the first missionary journey, slips into oblivion after ch 15.

Even the great apostle Paul, who dominates the last half of the book, is left in the final chapter in Rome.

A)The book abruptly closes with an account of Paul in prison, with no account of his subsequent work or martyrdom.

B)It just ends there as though you might turn over the next page and begin the next adventure.

C)The Point is this – These Characters and men are not the focus – It is Jesus in them, working thru the lives of individuals in the same way that He works today.

There is a reason the book ends abruptly

A)The book of Acts is an unfinished book.

B)It has never been ended, but is still being written..

C)This book is Volume 1, and we in 2010 are writing Volume 21 now.

1)The HS continues to work through believers all over the world.

D)Maybe this will be the last volume in the series

I am ready for Jesus to return – are YOU

Now as we work our way thru this book we are going to divide it into 5

different series or sections

1st section will focus on Chapters 1-2 – “Anchored but Moving Forward.”

A) That is where we find the early Church- They were Anchored into who Jesus was!

B) Their hopes had been dashed when they watched him die {Messiah / Kingdom- Rome – { Repeat above

1) but when He Rose – Hope Rez took place in their hearts

C) Thru His Rez they became assured of who He was { He was the Lord – their Messiah their King

D) That was their Anchor!

1) That is what they were holding on to like a Rock climber – anchored into a massive MT.

Luke makes mention of that Anchor here in V. 3

3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Many infallible proofs: Christians don't check their brains at the door –

A) Christianity is an intelligent faith- that centers around one key Belief

B) That Jesus Rose again from the Dead – Lives – Ascended – lives in and through His Followers:

C) Dr. Luke gives us three categories of these proofs.

enemies of Christianity who say that the appearances of Jesus were really nothing but hallucinations,

D) They say they occurred only in the imaginations of these disciples, and that He really was not there.

E) But, says Luke, let me show you the three categories of proof that he was risen:

One, he appeared to them during forty days.

A) The word “seen” here in V.3 in the Greek is *optanomai* (opt/tan/nomy) from which we get our English word ophthalmologist, or eye doctor.

Aa) It literally means Jesus was being “eyeballed” by them, “stared at,” or “scrutinized him examined.”

B) Which makes perfect sense – they Knew He died

1) He was buried and now – He was alive – They couldn’t take their eyes off of him -

C) Not only did His disciples see Him, but according to 1 Corinthians 15:6, there were 500 eyewitnesses to whom Jesus appeared following His Resurrection.

D) They saw him again and again, not merely once, but many times during this period.

1) Each time he looked exactly the same. It is hard for an hallucination to accomplish that.

Then, second, he spoke to them:

A) Luke says, we even remember his subject matter. He talked about the kingdom of God.

B) We saw him and heard him, two objective sensory experiences that

confirmed to us that this was no fantasy, no hallucination.

Finally, third, the ultimate proof was, "he ate with us."

A)The phrase v.4 being assembled Lit reads *On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command*

B)those who were there saw him eat.

C)They saw the food disappear. It is surely terribly hard to get an hallucination to eat!

1)Luke says, "This is the proof; he ate with us, so we know he is alive."

Awesome new Bodies – Eat and not get fat!

This was their Anchor – the resurrection of Jesus

“The marvelous fact of the resurrection of Jesus is the bedrock upon which all Christian faith ultimately rests.”

“If Christ be not risen, then our faith is in vain,” 1 Corinthians 15:17

Here today and you don’t know Christ the reality of the Rez is something that you must deal with – Answer for the Empty tomb –

A)Jesus rose – He is alive – one day you will give an answer to him

B)So that is what they were Anchored into –
Jesus was alive

1)but they were not going to just sit around excited that they knew the truth and were going to Heaven.

C)They were Anchored into the Truth of Who Jesus was – but they were moving forward on a mission that He had given to them. **Mission to impact their world**

Luke in V. 4-5 – Gives us the Missions requirements:

A) Mission impossible – If you choose to except them –

B) Here in V. 4-5 Jesus reveals what is going to be required to make an impossible mission Possible.

4 And being assembled together with them, Lit reads *On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command*

He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Here is the requirement:

A) Before they embarked on the mission – they needed to wait in Jerusalem to be Baptized with the Holy Spirit!

{ Detail next week } V.8 explains what this means

B) It is also important to note that **the book of Acts is shrouded in Conflict** – It Chronicles the life of the Church during a time when it **was Dangerous** to be a follower of Jesus Christ –

C) But in the midst of the Danger it shows a group of people who were so in love with Jesus Christ –

1) so Convinced in His Lordship – they were confident to fulfill the Mission He commissioned to them.

He wanted them to stay in Jerusalem!

A) Jerusalem was a Dangerous place to be –

B)It was in Jerusalem that they just saw their leader Jesus get killed – 1)and those who had him killed were not **real excited about the reports that Jesus had risen from the dead and was seen by his followers.**

C)So it makes perfect sense that the Disciples followed Jesus giving the missions requirement with this **question 6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"**

The Jews viewed the kingdom in political terms.

A)Jesus view of the Kingdom was way different

B)He taught them to pray – Your Kingdom come your will be done – on earth as it is in Heaven!

C)Jesus viewed the Kingdom – as God's will being done in the lives of people.

1)God's will being carried out on earth as it was in Heaven

D)The Revolution starts with God's will being carried out in your life! – Starts with being Saved

Living Sacrifice – Living for Christ

7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

A)Jesus is saying – Don't be so concerned about – When I am coming: **No one knows the day...hour**

B)Bible Prophecy – love it – Jesus is coming soon! – 1)But we don't know when. No man knows the day or the hour! –

C) Don't be worried about when it is going to happen – it will happen when it is supposed to happen –

1) yes we are getting closer – But don't focus on the **when** – Focus on the **what**

What are we supposed to be doing – while we wait for Jesus to return?

A) Jesus gave his disciples a mission: This was His revolutionary Strategy for reaching the world.

B) we have been given the same mission. – The mission is laid out for us in V. 8

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Note 3 things about the mission:

#1 THE MISSIONS POWER: “•But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. •”

B) There was a brief interlude of about ten days, and then the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles,

C) This was a new Concept: John 14:17 /
John 20:21 Receive the Holy Spirit /
Acts 1:8 Upon

D) Result: Empowered – Bold – Healing – Preaching –

Anchored but moving forward with a dependency upon the power of the HS

#2 THE MISSION ITSELF: They were called to be witnesses for Christ

A) This is the recurring message of Acts. The word occurs no less than thirty-nine times. For example:

“•God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. •” (•2:32)

“•You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. •” (•3:15)

“•We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. •” (•10:39)

“• You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. •” (•22:15)

A) Now when we think of a witness we think of someone testifying of the truth in a court of law –

B) This definitely carries that idea - We TESTIFY – the truth of who Christ is

C) In Greek the word for *witness* and the word for *martyr* are the same (*martus*). A witness had to be ready to become a martyr. To be a witness means to be loyal no matter the cost.

But note the context : You SHALL receive Power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you – empowers you – living through you.

And He (the Holy Spirit) SHALL cause you to become my Witnesses.

This right here is the Strategy of the Revolution

A) God's people indwelt with the Spirit of Christ

Empowered by the Holy Spirit – to TESTIFY of the reality of Christ.

B) To RADIATE the life and love of Christ to a dark, dying and sinful

world.

C) That is the Mission they were called to – that is the mission we are called to.

#3 THE MISSION'S EXTENT

Jerusalem: starts where they were at

Judea: surrounding areas

Samaria – people they didn't like including Gentiles

Ends of the earth

GENERATION AFTER GENERATION

Christ's work continues as He works through:

Chosen men.

Obedient men

Spirit-filled men

Men working together

Anchored but moving forward in their desire to reach the Lost.

Your life- Your Jerusalem – Family – Neighbors –

Judea – work place

Samaria – People you don't necessarily get along with

Uttermost parts – Missions

Our Goal as a Church – Help you be that Witness

V.9-11 We see the Motivation of the Mission: Read

A) They watched him leave – TOLD HE WOULD RETURN IN LIKE MANNER

B) They believed He could come back at any moment

Anchored but moving forward in a belief in the imminent return of Christ

Question I have for you today Jan 3rd 2010 Do you want to be a part of the Revolution

A)4 types of pp here today:

Unbelievers – Jesus died rose – lives – You need to embrace – turn

Carnal – Trying to live on both sides of the fence – miserable – no affect on your world at all. – Need to Surrender – Anchored today – Jesus as your Lord and King

Complacent – Playing it safe – Jesus is coming again heard that before – distracted – by life – content to be saved – anchored into that – Join the Revolution – Jesus I am yours use me

Those following hard – Stay dependent on the Holy Spirit