

Take It To The Streets

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”
(Acts 1:8).

The whole key to the Book of Acts is taking the Gospel to where the people really are. The Book of Acts is a vivid portrayal of taking the gospel to the streets. The Gospels show the Life of Christ but Acts shows us how the early Christians lived out the teachings of Jesus Christ and what they did with the Great Commission and with the baptism of the Holy Spirit that they received.

Acts shows us how to:

- ❑ Evangelize people.
- ❑ Establish them into churches.
- ❑ Extend the church to the unreached.

The principles apply in any generation of time. We see the fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus Christ given in Matthew 16:18, “...I will build my church...”

Go! Go! Go!

Acts is *also a fulfillment of the Great Commission* found in Matthew 28:19-20; “GO ye therefore, and teach all nations...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...”

The Great Commission is the mission of the church. It is not the “Great Suggestion.” It is not a wish but a command of the Lord to the Church. Failure to obey results in our Great Omission. The first word of this great task is “Go!” The first two letters in the word “Gospel” is also “Go!”

We must “Go” if we expect to evangelize the lost world. We must “Go!” if we will ever establish churches.

T. F. Tenney once said, “Which part of the word ‘GO!’ don’t you understand?”

We must “Go!” if we are to extend the “whole gospel to the whole world.” This is the task of the entire church.

The two major activities of the Great Commission are “Going” and “Making Disciples.”

The principle of the Harvest is made clear in Psalm 126:6, “He that GOETH forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”

Focus of the Gospel

The focus of the Gospel is outward towards a lost world. We come to church to fellowship and worship our God. However, we cannot become inwardly focused by placing all of our attention on the inside of the church. We come to church to WORSHIP but we leave the church to WITNESS. Once we walk out of the doors of the local assembly we are in a mission field. It is here that we meet unbelievers where they feel comfortable and on their own grounds. We cannot expect the sinners to come to the Gospel. We must take the Gospel to the sinners. The Word of God and its many truths cannot be hid under a bushel, but we must be like a light set on a hill (Matthew 5:15).

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:” (2 Corinthians 4:3).

After Pentecost, What?

In Acts 2 we see the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Immediately we see Peter standing with the eleven and preaching a powerful, Pentecostal sermon.

Hungry people were convicted and converted. The church was born. What did they do with the Holy Spirit that they had received? In Acts 3 we see two men on their way to prayer meeting at their church. As they passed by a gate, a lame beggar started to cry out for money. The men immediately recognized his need for healing. Money would only last for a day but healing would be a greater blessing to the man, lasting for a lifetime. These men did not carry the lame man to the church so that the pastor and saints could pray for him.

Right there on the street they prayed for him and Jesus healed him. What a tremendous witness! Then, the man joined them by going to church. At church people worshipped God for the result of His goodness and healing power. The man also came to church to worship and praise God.

The two men got into trouble for being used of God in the healing of the man. They were arrested, abused, and threatened. When they were released they prayed that the Lord would give them great boldness and that He would stretch forth His hands to heal, and that signs and wonders would be done. (Acts 4:29-30). Where would these great things be accomplished? Right on the streets!

“And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people... Insomuch that they brought forth the sick INTO THE STREETS, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them” (Acts 5:12,15).

As you read through the Book of Acts you will find that the Gospel was preached more in houses than it was in churches.

The work of the Deacons was not only confined to the local assembly but they also were used in evangelism. Philip was used by God as an evangelist and his story follows the words, “...they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4).

More evangelism would get done, and more churches established, if we would do more of taking the Gospel everywhere. Philip was commanded by an angel to “...Arise, and GO” (Acts 8:26). As he obeyed he found a man of Ethiopia; in a chariot (taxi, bus) reading the Bible.

Philip got into the chariot (taxi) and as it moved along the street he preached Jesus to the man. They stopped the chariot (taxi, bus) to baptize him in Jesus name. Today, we have an outstanding revival in the country of Ethiopia; perhaps because Philip planted the seed.

In Acts 9 we see the conversion of Saul (Paul). He was struck down on the road to Damascus by a great light; confronted by the “Light of the World” and left in blindness. Jesus did not preach the Gospel to Saul. The angels did not come and preach the Gospel to Saul. This is a duty given to those who have experienced salvation themselves. Thus, the Lord spoke to Ananias (a certain disciple) and told him, “Arise, and GO into the street which is called Straight...” (Acts 9:11). He did just that. He found Saul, prayed for his healing; prayed him through to the baptism of the Holy Spirit; and he arose and was baptized (Acts 9:17-18).

In Acts 16 we see that Paul preached at a Ladies Prayer Meeting. This meeting was not held inside the church but out of the city, by the riverside. As a result of Paul’s ministry Lydia and her household were baptized.

In some churches “Street Meetings” are used as a form of evangelism. Some churches in Chile require their new converts to go out into the streets and give their testimonies the following Sunday after their conversion. People can argue with words; but no one can argue with the testimony of a converted and changed life. Once people are converted on the streets they are brought to the church to feed on the Word of God. A man prepared a great banquet and invited many to attend.

Several of those invited began to make excuses. When the servant reported this to the man, he angrily told them, “...Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.” When the servant returned there was still

room for more. He was then requested to, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Luke 14: 21, 23).

There is a hungry world out there waiting for you to take it to the streets and compel them to come in that God's house may be filled.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos 8:11).

Study Questions

1. What is the whole key to the Book of Acts? _____

2. What is the difference between the Gospel and the Book of Acts? _____

3. What does Acts show us concerning the church? _____

4. What is the Great Commission? Where is it found? _____

5. Failure to obey the Great Commission results in what? _____

6. What is the first word of the Great Commission and also the first two letters in the word "Gospel"? _____

7. Where is the focus of the Gospel? _____

