

EMPOWER

21 DAYS OF PRAYER & FASTING

EMPOWERED

Acts 1 (ESV)

January 7, 2024

Jon Field, Lead Pastor

MESSAGE NOTES

"And behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." – Luke 24:49 (ESV)

"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." – Acts 1:8 (ESV)

*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.
– Acts 1:1 – 2 (ESV)*

- **Acts is about trusting God for His empowerment**

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." – Acts 1:3 – 5 (ESV)

"And behold, I am sending the Promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." – Luke 24:49 (ESV)

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. – Acts 1:12 – 13 (ESV)

All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brothers. – Acts 1:14 (ESV)

In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry." – Acts 1:15 – 17 (ESV)

(Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) – Acts 1:18 – 19 (ESV)

EMPOWER

21 DAYS OF PRAYER & FASTING

"For it is written in the Book of Psalms, " 'May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it'; and " 'Let another take his office.' So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ..."

– Acts 1:20 – 21 (ESV)

"... beginning from the baptism of John until the day when He was taken up from us – one of these men must become with us a witness to His resurrection." And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. – Acts 1:22 – 23 (ESV)

And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." – Acts 1:24 – 25(ESV)

And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. – Acts 1:26 (ESV)

Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD! – Psalm 27:14 (ESV)

- **Acts is about trusting God in the waiting**

- Sometimes we wait impatiently

- Sometimes we doubt while we wait

- Sometimes we force the wait

- **Acts is about trusting God to change the world one life at a time through the Gospel.**

"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 to the end of the earth." – Acts 1:8 (ESV)

EMPOWER

21 DAYS OF PRAYER & FASTING

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Discussion Starter: Share a dream or goal of yours for 2024 with your group.
- Read Acts 1:8. What did Christ mean when he told us we would receive power and be His “witnesses”? Where are we called to be witnesses and what does that look like in everyday life?
- What was your biggest takeaway from Acts 1?
- Why is it significant that Acts was written by Luke who was a non-Jew in displaying the Gospel being brought to the nations?
- What is an area in your life where you are wanting to trust God for more of His power and wisdom?
- Do you think the disciples jumped the gun in choosing Matthias as the twelfth apostle to replace Judas? Why or why not?
- Read Psalm 27:14. How does God encourage us while we are waiting? What does it mean to “Wait for the Lord”?
- How does God use waiting to develop our character and deepen our relationship with Him?
- What is an example from your life of a “planned detour” that God used in your story to get you where he wanted you in life or in your development as a Christ follower?
- If you feel comfortable, share what you are fasting from during these 21 Days of prayer and fasting. Share why you chose that to fast from. Pray for God’s power for the people of ENCOUNTER today and into the future.