



Aldrich Church Small Group Curriculum,
Fall 2011
Week 1: You Will Be My Witnesses

*When you think of the book of Acts, what do you think of?
Have you ever read the book straight through?*

What are your hopes and questions heading into this study of Acts?

Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.

What do we learn about this book from these introductory lines?

Are there any differences between the apostles and other Christians?

What is the implication of the line, "all that Jesus began to do and to teach"?

3After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

What do you think Jesus focused on in teaching "about the kingdom of God?" In other words, what is "the kingdom of God" according to Jesus?

4On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5For John baptized with a water, but in a few days you will be baptized with a the Holy Spirit."

What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Is it different from "being filled by the Holy Spirit" or "being in the Spirit"?

6So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.

8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

What are the assumptions behind the apostle's question?

How does Jesus' answer address these assumptions?

Why do you think Jesus mentions these geographical locations?

How are we to be "witnesses" of Jesus over 2,000 years after he lived on earth?

Can you share an example of the Spirit's empowerment for you or someone you know to be a witness of Jesus?

9After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a loud hid him from their sight. 10They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

What is the significance of Jesus departure?

When it says Jesus "will come back in the same way" what does that mean to you?

12Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk *b* from the city. 13When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Why do you think Luke includes these details about the apostle's return to Jerusalem? What are we to take away from this scene?