

Philip as Missionary

Acts 1: 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.”
Acts 1: 8.



I. Introduction

Witnessing for Christ is sharing with those who are around us the most beautiful truth regarding the future of humanity: THERE IS HOPE IN JESUS. Everything makes sense with His plan of salvation. The Biblical message for the end of time opens new perspectives and transforms the life of suffering and empty pleasures into joy, peace, and love.



“Whatever we do, we must not
treat the Great Commission
like it's the Great Suggestion.”
Charles R. Swindoll



“We have a gospel hardened generation of sinners by telling them how to be saved before they have any understanding why they need to be saved.”
Paris Reidhead



“Christians need a new filling of the Holy Spirit to love those who disagree with them. And the greatest expression of love is to share with them the most precious thing a Christian has, which is the good news of the salvation of Jesus Christ.”

Andrew van der Bijl



I am a big proponent of the concept that Christianity is more “caught that taught” and that a person’s meaningful involvement in the process is critical to them experiencing the power of the gospel in their lives. This meaningful involvement takes time and persevering love.”

Gary Rohrmayer, Spiritual Conversations: Creating and Sustaining Them Without Being a Jerk



The best attitude before presenting Jesus

"Bearing witness is largely nonverbal. It is the choice to give the gift of a pure expression of love and respect, being a compassionate observer to the unfolding of another person's life or a particular moment or event.

When we bear witness, we lovingly give our attention to the other without judgment. We comfort without smothering. We play a supporting role -- powerfully upholding the other starring in his or her life. It is not about us. It is about them. Yet, we make a profound decision when we do not try to fix their pain and suffering or share in their experience by telling how we had a similar experience. Bearing witness says, "You are not alone. I see you. I witness what you are experiencing. What you are experiencing matters to me. I surround you with my love."

"There is a common, worldly kind of Christianity in this day, which many have, and think they have enough-a cheap Christianity which offends nobody, and requires no sacrifice-which costs nothing, and is worth nothing."

J. C. Ryle



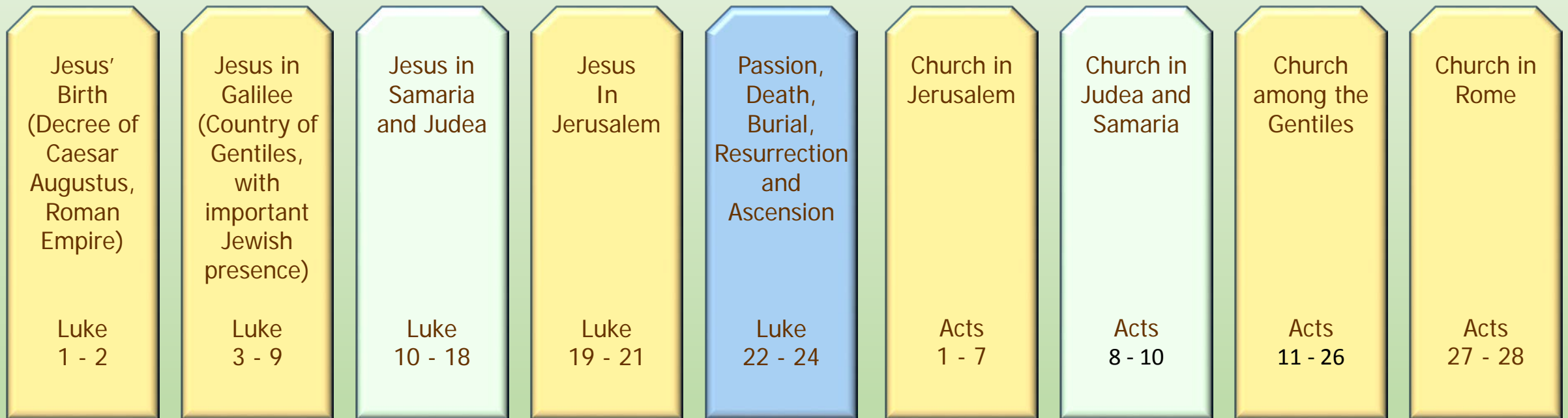
“Servant Evangelism wins the heart before it confronts the mind. A small act of kindness nudges a person closer to God, often in a profound way as it bypasses ones mental defenses. Kindness builds the bridge for the person to receive a touch of love from God. It’s simple, practical, effective, inexpensive and fun!”
Steve Sjogren



II. Context



The Narrative of the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts



The beginning of the first chapter of the Book of Acts relates the Ascension of Jesus and His last message to the Twelve. The verse 8 ("and you shall be my witnesses") is the answer of Jesus to the request of disciples who wanted to know the time of His coming. The disciples were more interested to satisfy their own curiosity than to think about the task of witnessing for God's kingdom. Therefore the best answer to those who are interested with biblical speculation, or with the prophetic calculation, is to refer to Jesus: "Don't speculate about the date of my coming. Be my witnesses and help people to be ready for the day of judgment".

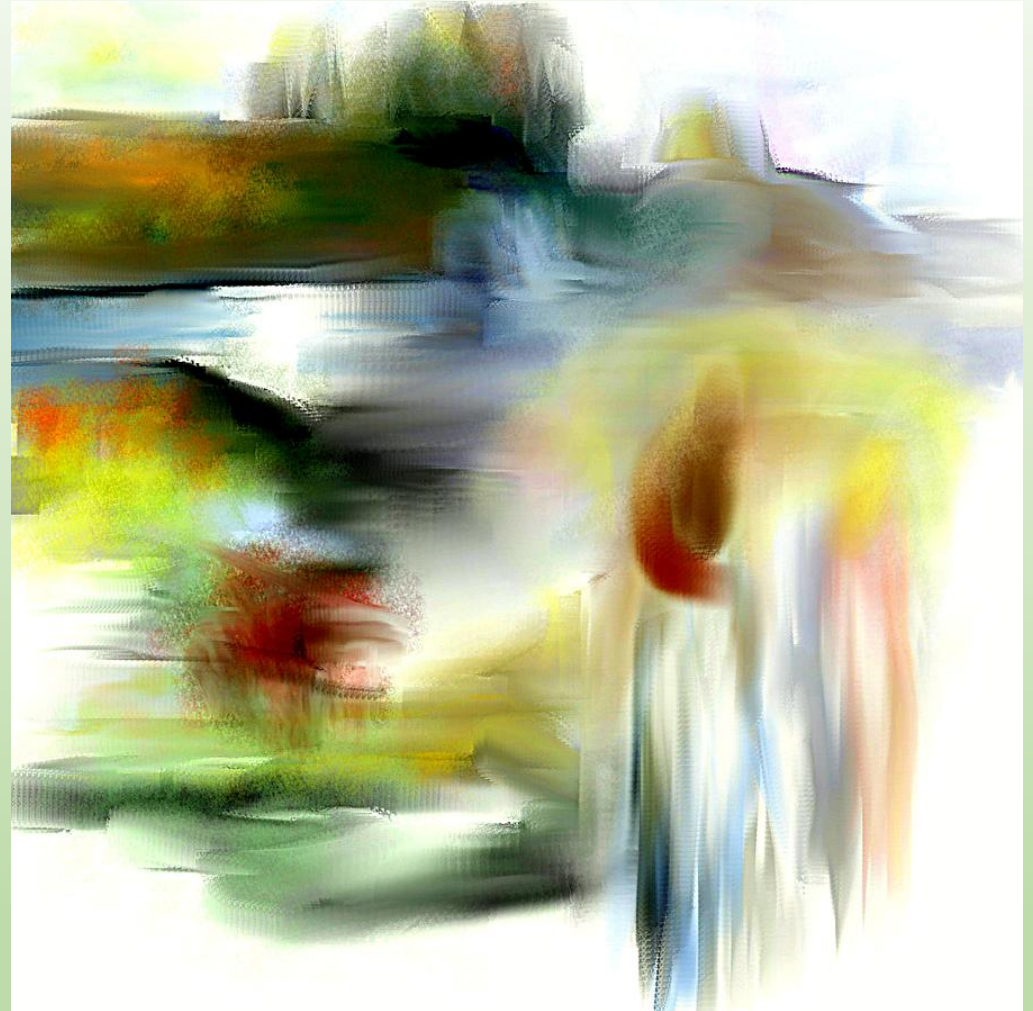
Another aspect coming from the context of Acts chapter 1 is the fact that Jesus asked His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the power of the Holy Spirit. The witnessing is challenging without God's supernatural power. It is better to spend time asking for the divine power than to gesticulate and to do everything with human power. Therefore, the first step for an effective witnessing is: **ASKING FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT, MAKING OUR MINDS RECEPTIVE TO RECEIVE HIS POWER,** in a spirit of prayer, unity and humility.



The third aspect of Jesus' last speech to His disciples is the supremacy of the Holy Spirit. The text of Acts 1 is not just talking about the guidance of the Holy Spirit, or about His inspiration. Luke transmits Jesus' message where He insists on "the baptism with the Holy Spirit (NKJV). The idea is not related to a question of influence, or to the contribution of Heaven to our efforts. The baptism of Acts 1 means "TO BE IMMERGED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT". Thus, according to Jesus' teaching, the witnesses have to be immersed in the Holy Spirit, they will 'disappear' within the beauty, the strength, and the infinite love of God Himself.



III. God calls us to witness his own Character. And He qualifies us to do it in the way that will give glory to His name.



1. Receiving the Holy Spirit implies receiving power

“But you shall receive power when
the Holy Spirit has come upon you.”



"The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for the purpose of cleansing from sin, but for the purpose of empowering for service."
R. A. Torrey



“Human strength is weakness, human wisdom is folly. Our success does not depend on our talents or learning, but on our living connection with God... The plan of salvation is not presented in its simplicity for the reason that few ministers know what simple faith is. An intellectual knowledge of the truth is not enough; we must know its power upon our own hearts and lives. Ministers need to come to Christ as little children. Seek Jesus, brethren, confess your sins, plead with God day and night, until you know that for Christ’s sake you are pardoned and accepted. Then will you love much because you have been forgiven much. Then you can point others to Christ as a sin-pardoning Redeemer. Then you can present the truth from the fullness of a heart that feels its sanctifying power. I fear for you, my brethren. I counsel you to tarry at Jerusalem, as did the early disciples, until, like them, you receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit”
Ellen G. White, 5T, p. 158. 159.

"The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace. The men and women who through the long centuries of persecution and trial enjoyed a large measure of the presence of the Spirit in their lives, have stood as signs and wonders in the world. Before angels and men they have revealed the transforming power of redeeming love." Ellen G. White, Acts of Apostles, p. 49.

2. Witnessing or doing evangelism is always about presenting God and His Character

"And you shall be witnesses to Me"



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"There is only one reality. That reality is God. The soul of man must contact God, and unless the spirit of man is truly joined to God, there is no such thing as real Christian manifestation."
John G. Lake



“Christ has given to the church a sacred charge. Every member should be a channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that the Saviour desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and His character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour’s love. All heaven is waiting for men and women through whom God can reveal the power of Christianity.

The church is God’s agency for the proclamation of truth, empowered by Him to do a special work; and if she is loyal to Him, obedient to all His commandments, there will dwell within her the excellency of divine grace. If she will be true to her allegiance, if she will honor the Lord God of Israel, there is no power that can stand against her.”

Ellen G. White, Acts of Apostles, p. 600.

3. Witnessing is a universal task, because God wants to reach the entire world with His message of love

"in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 1: 8.



“Evangelization is a process of bringing the gospel to people where they are, not where you would like them to be... When the gospel reaches a people where they are, their response to the gospel is the church in a new place.”

Vincent Donovan



"The Church must send
or the church will end."
Mendell Taylor



"In every revival there is a re-emphasis of the Church's missionary character. Men return to Calvary, and the world is seen afresh through the eyes of Christ. The infinite compassion of Christ fills the heart, and the passion evoked by Calvary demands the whole wide world as the fruit of His sacrifice."

John Shearer



"We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God."

John Stott



V. Conclusion



“What price are you willing to pay to see your church actively engaged in evangelism? Price? What do you mean by price? There is a cost for everything. One of the causes for evangelistic entropy is an unwillingness to count the cost of growth. If evangelism is really going to be a value that your church embraces, the church will have to embrace the changes that will take place when evangelism is activated in the church.”

Gary Rohrmayer,
Spiritual Conversations



"Lose no opportunity of witnessing for Christ. He is the source of all grace, and he will send to his people the precious golden oil, enabling them to witness boldly for him. As we consecrate ourselves to God, the Holy Spirit will impart to us the holy oil, that our lamps may be kept bright and shining."
Ellen G. White, Review and Herald, May 16, 1899, par. 13.



"In this work more than in any secular business, success is proportioned to the spirit of consecration and self-sacrifice with which the work is done. Those who bear responsibility as managers in the work need to place themselves where they can be deeply impressed by the Spirit of God. You should have as much greater anxiety than do others to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and a knowledge of God and Christ, as your position of trust is more responsible than that of the common worker."

Ellen G. White, 7T, p. 188. 189.



“Father in Heaven! When the thought of thee wakes in our hearts let it not awaken like a frightened bird that flies about in dismay, but like a child waking from its sleep with a heavenly smile.”
S. Kierkegaard



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