



Message Guide

FOR JUNE 22, 2025

THE STORY UNLEASHED- 1



Acts 1-2

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We are launching into a brand-new series of messages from the book of Acts called, The Story Unleashed. This year, which is now almost half-way gone, has been a year of stories in our preaching series. We've been working our way through the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1 divided into three parts and interspersed with other teaching series. Since we're just about half-way through the year, here is a recap of what we have done so far.

- Every Name Has a Story—Genealogy Part 1 (Abraham to David)
- Like No Other—Jesus (Matthew's Gospel)
- Practicing the Way of Jesus (Deep Dive Series)
- A Story of Choices—Genealogy Part 2 (David to Babylonian Exile)
- The Story Unleashed—The Book of Acts

1. When was a time, maybe in your childhood, when you were given full freedom to do something you had previously been restrained from doing? Who or what gave you that freedom? How did you respond when you were unleashed?

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) give us the story of Jesus. The book of Acts gives us the story of Jesus' Church. Acts is the second volume of Luke the Physician's writings in the New Testament. He wrote the Gospel of Luke with the stated purpose being:

Many people have set out to write accounts about the events that have been fulfilled among us. They used the eyewitness reports circulating among us from the early disciples. Having carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I also have decided to write an accurate account for you, most honorable Theophilus, so you can be certain of the truth of everything you were taught.

(Luke 1:1-4, NLT)



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And Luke wrote the book of Acts by introducing it with these words:

In my first book I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit. During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1:1-5, NLT)

2. What would have been going through your mind if Jesus said to you, "do not leave your church building, or do not walk out of your house, or don't leave your town, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit"? Do you think Jesus is saying this so you would just go on with life as usually but have warm-fuzzy feelings about having the Holy Spirit? Or would you anticipate that something was going to change in your life, that you would be moved to leave the church building, your house, or your town?

Right out of the gate we learn that post-resurrection of Jesus, these early followers were going to be baptized and empowered by the Holy Spirit. This actually gives us a clue as to how this book written to Theophilus is organized. The story of the early church is unleashed by the Holy Spirit. The church continues the mission of Jesus by the power of the Spirit for God's Kingdom work in the world.

Luke goes on to write:

So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?" He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:6-8, NLT)



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The apostles were right about focusing on God's Kingdom, since Jesus spoke to them about the Kingdom of God (verse 3). But they had a wrong view of the Kingdom. It wasn't a military, political kingdom that God would restore. Jesus said, *"My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world"* (**John 18:36, NLT**).

God's Kingdom is about restored relationship with God, and God restoring all creation to its original design. It's a Kingdom of resurrected power, which is why Jesus is somewhat dismissive with His disciples' question, when he says, *"The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you"* (**Acts 1:7-8a, NLT**).

Through that power from the Holy Spirit, Jesus says His followers will become witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

- In Jerusalem (**Acts 2:1-4**)
- In Samaria (**Acts 8:12, 17**)
- To the Gentiles (**Acts 10:44-45, 47-48**)
- "The ends of the earth" (**Acts 13:1-4, and the rest of Acts**)

3. Read these passages above, do you see each time that the church is "unleashed" by the power of the Holy Spirit?

So, what does this mean for us? Just a nice overview of the book of Acts, or is there more to the story?

As a church, we are all unleashed through the same Holy Spirit, empowered to join together to do God's Kingdom work. What does that look like? Well, we're all united in disciple-making. Our mission is Helping people take next steps with Jesus. But that's not just a "O, what next steps do I need to take?" But "How are WE all helping others take THEIR next steps with Jesus?" If you're part of the E91 family, you are part of the E91 mission.

Our E91 definition of a disciple of Jesus is: Someone who loves and follows Jesus with others. We are not called to robotic obedience; we are called to loving obedience in following Jesus. And we follow Jesus with others. We need one another. We need one another to fulfill a vision as a debt-free church of where the Lord is leading us into the future.

Our vision is based on Acts 1:8 where we receive power through the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses in:

- **Jerusalem—Our campus**
Launch CDC, E91 Ministry Center, Using our location for greater Kingdom impact in our community and beyond. To become a destination place and a launching pad to transform lives, families, and communities through Jesus Christ.



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- **Judea—Our community**

Mary Castle, 96th and Allisonville, Castleton. If we ceased to exist, would anyone notice?

- **Samaria—Our region**

In the future we will be launching our first multi-site north of 146th St. between Westfield and Noblesville to reach more people for Christ.

- **Ends of the earth—Our world**

Increase in missions, short-term mission trips, developing new partnerships such as WWHO—World-wide Health Organization: a medical mission in Mexico that uses clinics and a new hospital to bring healing to people both physically and spiritually through Jesus and plant new churches as a result.

We see the church unleashed by the Holy Spirit, and we can all move forward together in a vision God is giving us in our own Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and around the world.

1. It means Personal Lordship: Who is the Lord of your life?

In Acts 2, Peter was preaching to people gathered in Jerusalem, and he quotes from the prophet Joel, “And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (**Acts 2:21, ESV**).

“Then Peter preaches about Jesus of Nazareth: “This Jesus ... you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up” (**Acts 2:23-24, ESV**). “This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing...” (**Acts 2:33, ESV**).

“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.” Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (**Acts 2:36-38, ESV**)

And 3,000 people responded and were baptized (**v. 41**). The first issue is the issue of lordship. Who is the Lord of your life?

2. It means Personal Devotion: To what are you devoting your life?

“All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer. (**Acts 2:42, NLT**)



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Every church should have solid teaching, fellowship—meaning more than coffee and donuts, hospitality—including communion or the Lord’s Supper to remember Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection, and prayer. Which leads us to the third personal application:

3. It means Personal Relationships: With whom are you living life on mission with Jesus?

“They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved (Acts 2:46-47, NLT)

But to be on mission means we are not just building relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ, but we are building relationships with our co-workers, our neighbors, and others that God puts in our path.

So, where are you in your relationship with Jesus, devotion to the things of Jesus, and relationship with others? Are you ready to be Unleashed by the power of the Holy Spirit?