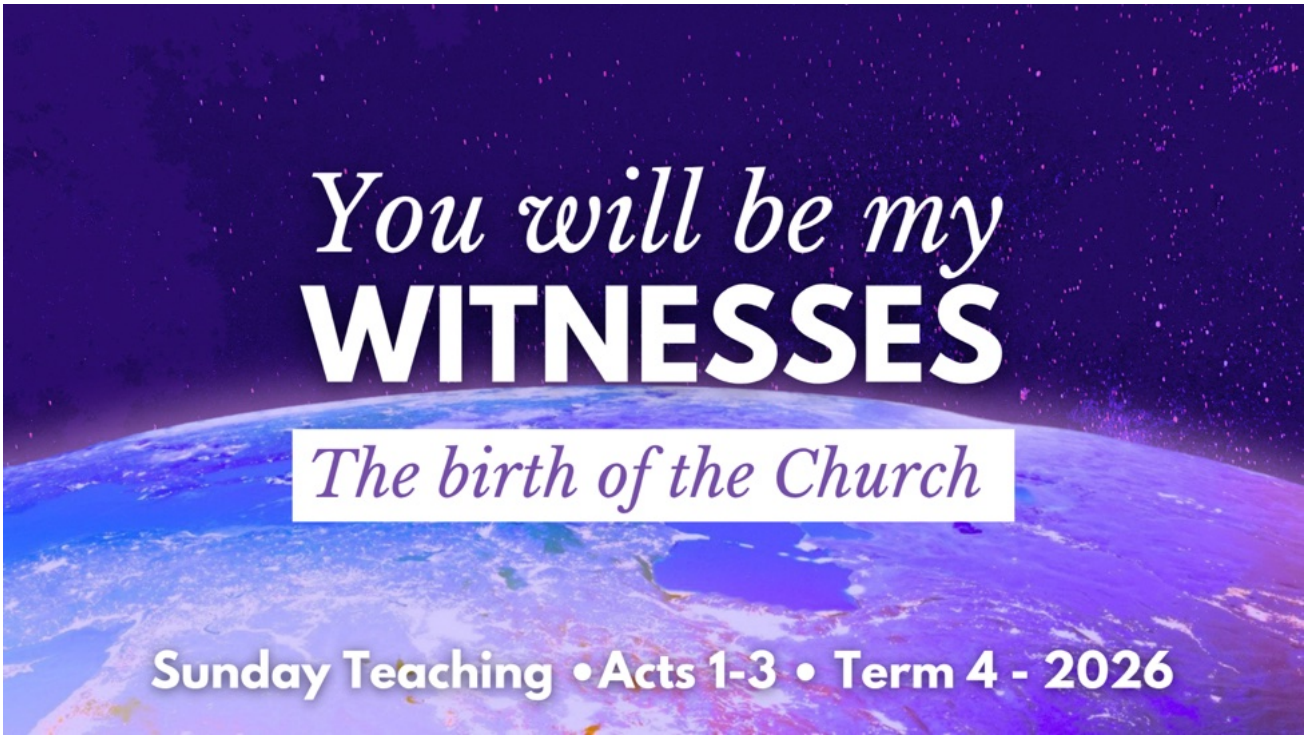


OVERVIEW

The opening chapters of Acts show us how God's saving purposes continue to unfold through the risen and ascended Lord Jesus. In Acts 1, Jesus ascends to heaven as King and Lord, commissioning his followers to be his witnesses. In Acts 2, the promised Holy Spirit arrives, empowering God's people to proclaim the good news of Jesus. As people hear the gospel, repent and believe, a new community is formed, devoted to God's Word, prayer, worship and loving one another. In Acts 3, we see the risen Jesus continuing his work through his people, as Peter proclaims Jesus as the fulfilment of God's promises and the source of life, forgiveness and blessing.

Together, these chapters remind us that **it's all about Jesus**. He is the risen Lord who reigns, the Saviour who transforms lives, and the one who calls people from every nation to repent, believe and enjoy life in God's kingdom. As his people, we are empowered by his Spirit to live for him and make him known.

SERMON SERIES

WEEK 1 – JESUS' ASCENSION

WEEK 2 – THE SPIRIT COMES

WEEK 3 – JESUS THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISES

STUDY 1 – JESUS' ASCENSION
ACTS 1:1-26

Share

Think about a time when someone you relied on, looked up to, or learned from moved away or left. How did their absence affect you? ***Or*** How did you feel when the proximity of your friendship with someone changed?

Observe & Reflect

Read Acts 1:1-8

1. Luke says that his Gospel recorded what Jesus began to do and teach (v. 1). What does this suggest about what Jesus continues to do in the book of Acts?

2. The disciples ask Jesus, "*Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?*" (v. 6). What were they expecting Jesus to do? How does Jesus redirect their attention in verses 7-8? (cf Rev 7:9)

3. Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will empower his disciples to be his witnesses, from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (v. 8). Why do you think they needed the Spirit's power rather than simply relying on their own abilities?

Read Acts 1:9-11

4. What does Jesus' ascension tell us about who Jesus is and where he is now? How is the ascension more than simply Jesus leaving the earth? (Read John 15:26-16:15, Acts 2:32-33)

5. The angels tell the disciples that Jesus will return (v. 11). How should the promise of Jesus' return shape the way we live and serve him now?

6. Before the ascension, Jesus was physically present with his disciples. After the ascension, he continues his work from heaven through the promised Holy Spirit. How does this help us understand what Jesus is doing in the world today?

Read Acts 1:12-26

7. Verse 14 says the disciples were *"continually united in prayer."* What does their example teach us about depending on God as we wait, serve and share the good news about Jesus?

8. When choosing a replacement for Judas, the disciples pray, *"You, Lord, know the hearts of all; show which of these two you have chosen"* (v. 24). What does this reveal about how they understood the Lord's role in leading his people?

9. The church as more than an organization running programs, filling rosters and keeping the lights on. How should knowing that Jesus is the risen and ascended Lord shape the way we approach church, ministry and serving others?

Next Steps

10. Jesus calls his followers to be his witnesses. Where do you find it easiest or hardest to speak about Jesus, whether at home, school, work or among friends?

11. Who is one person in your life who may need to hear about Jesus? What could you pray for them this week, and how might you look for an opportunity to talk with them about him?

12. What is one practical step you could take this week to live as someone who trusts Jesus as King and demonstrates his Lordship in your life?

Pray

STUDY 2 – THE SPIRIT COMES
ACTS 2

The promised Holy Spirit empowers God's people to proclaim Jesus, brings people to faith in Jesus, and grows a community centred on Jesus.

Share

Have you ever been in a situation where you knew you needed help to do something you couldn't manage on your own? What happened? ***And/Or*** When it comes to living as a Christian and sharing your faith, where do you find yourself needing God's help?

Observe & Reflect

Read Acts 2:1-13 (The coming of the Holy Spirit)

1. Why do you think the arrival of the Holy Spirit was accompanied with signs?

2. Why do you think God enabled the disciples to speak in different languages? What does this tell us about God's plans for the nations? (cf Matt 28:18-20, Gen 11 – reversal of Tower of Bebel, Revelation 7:9-10)

Read Acts 2:15-36 (The Spirit empowers and points people to Jesus)

3. Discuss Peter's explanation which entailed the life, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus. How does his explanation answer the crowd's question '*what could this be?*' (v12)

4. Peter declares that Jesus is both Lord and Messiah (verse 36). What is so significant about this? What implications does that have for the crowd? And for our lives?

Read Acts 2:37-47 (The Spirit brings people to Jesus and grows a community centred on Jesus)

5. What can we learn from the crowd?

6. What does it mean to *"repent…be baptised in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"?*

7. In verses 42–47, what stands out to you about the life and priorities of this new Christian community?

Next Steps - What kind of church are we becoming?

In verses 42–47, we see four characteristics of the early church. They were a learning church, a loving church, a worshipping church and a missional church.

- **A learning church:** How can we help one another grow in our understanding of God's Word and become more like Jesus in the way we live?
- **A loving church:** How can we become more intentional about caring for one another and sharing our lives and resources?
- **A worshipping church:** How can we make prayer, praise and thankfulness more central to our lives together, not just on Sundays but throughout the week?
- **A missional church:** How can we encourage one another to make Jesus known in our everyday lives?

Bringing it together: Which of these four characteristics do you think we're strongest in as a Church and Home Group? Which one could we most intentionally grow in? What's one practical thing we could do together to make that happen?

Pray