

Message Five

Continuing to Live in the Divine History within the Human History for the Spreading and Building Up of the Church as the Corporate Manifestation of Christ

Scripture Reading: Acts 1:8, 13-14; 2:16-18, 21; 5:20, 41-42; 6:4;
13:32-34; 16:6-7; 17:16; 19:21; 28:31

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

vv. 13-14 And when they entered, they went up to the upper room where they were residing, 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 brother* of James. These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

2:16-18 But this is what is spoken through the prophet Joel: “And it shall be in the last days, says God, *that* I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream *things* in dreams; And indeed upon My slaves, both men and women, I will pour out of My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy.”

v. 21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

5:20 Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.

vv. 41-42 So they went from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be dishonored on behalf of the Name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and announcing the gospel of Jesus *as* the Christ.

6:4 But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.

13:32-34 And we announce to you the gospel of the promise made to the fathers, That God has fully fulfilled this *promise* to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, “You are My Son; this day have I begotten You.” And as to His having raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to corruption, He spoke in this way, “I will give you the holy things of David, the faithful things.”

16:6-7 And they passed through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

17:16 And while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld that the city was full of idols.

19:21 And when these things were fulfilled, Paul purposed in his spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

28:31 Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

I. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history within the human history as the acting God; they have become God in life, in nature, in expression, and in function (but not in the Godhead) for the spreading and building up of the church as the corporate manifestation of Christ—1:8, 14; 2:14a; 4:10-20, 31-32; 5:20, 38-39; 13:1-4; 26:16-19; 28:31:

A. In Peter’s first proclamation of the gospel in the book of Acts, he quoted from the book of Joel, which reveals the intrinsic, divine history within the outward, human history—Acts 2:17-21; Joel 1:1-4; 2:28-32.

B. The divine history within the human history is Christ’s “goings forth...from the days of eternity” (Micah 5:2) across the bridge of time into eternity future (Psa. 90:2) so that He might be dispensed into His chosen ones as the Desire of all the nations (Hag. 2:7) for His corporate manifestation and His full glorification.

- C. Joel speaks concerning the outpouring of the processed, consummated, compound Spirit, who was poured out on the day of Pentecost; this Spirit is the consummated Triune God and the realization of Christ for the manifestation of Christ—2:28-29; Acts 2:1-4, 16-21; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.

II. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by calling on the name of the Lord, suffering on behalf of the name of the Lord, and speaking in the name of the Lord, the name of Jesus:

- A. Joel's prophecy and its fulfillment concerning God's New Testament jubilee have two aspects: on God's side, He poured out His Spirit in the ascension of the resurrected Christ; on our side, we call on the name of the ascended Lord, who has accomplished all, attained unto all, and obtained all—Acts 2:16-18, 21; Joel 2:28-29, 32a:
 - 1. Our divine history in the midst of human history is a history of calling on the name of the Lord to enjoy the riches of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ as the fullness of Christ—Rom. 10:12-13; Eph. 3:8, 19; 1:22-23.
 - 2. By calling on the name of the Lord, we keep ourselves in God's golden, divine history—a history that begins with Enosh (Gen. 4:26), continues through the Old and New Testaments (Job 12:4; Gen. 12:8; 26:25; Deut. 4:7; Judg. 15:18; 1Sam. 12:18; Psa. 116:4, 13, 17; 80:18; 88:9; 1 Kings 18:24; Isa. 12:4; Lam. 3:55, 57; Psa. 99:6; Isa. 55:6; Jonah 1:6; 2 Kings 5:11; Isa. 41:25; Acts 2:21; 7:59; 9:14, 21; 22:16; Rom. 10:12-13; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:22), and concludes with the last prayer in the Bible (Rev. 22:20).
- B. As we are living in the divine history, we suffer on behalf of the Lord's name within the human history; it is a real honor to be dishonored on behalf of the Name, the very name of the man-dishonored but God-honored Jesus—Acts 4:18-20, 29-31; 5:41-42; 9:13-16; 2 Cor. 6:4; 11:23; Col. 1:24-25.
- C. We carry out the divine history within the human history by speaking "boldly in the name of Jesus"; this name is the expression of the sum total of what the Lord is in His person and work—Acts 9:27; Phil. 2:9-11; 1 Thes. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:5.

III. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by living, moving, and acting as one Body; they do everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body:

- A. After the Lord Jesus died, resurrected, and ascended, He continued to live, act, walk, and work on earth in thousands of people because He imparted Himself into them through His death and resurrection—John 12:24.
- B. The four Gospels give us a picture of the Head, and the book of Acts shows us the Body; the book of Acts is actually the acts of Christ by the Spirit in the church as His Body, His reproduction and duplication—1:14; 2:14a, 42; 9:4-5; 28:13-15.

IV. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by rejecting themselves and living by another life—Christ as the divine life; this corporate living of Christ is the reality of the Body of Christ:

- A. The life that is indicated by "this life" in Acts 5:20 is the divine life preached, ministered, and lived by Peter that overcame the Jewish leaders' persecution, threatening, and imprisonment; Peter's life and work made the divine life so real and present in his situation that even the angel saw it and pointed it out.
- B. Paul lived Christ and served God by the all-inclusive Spirit of Jesus in his spirit (the divine Spirit mingled with his human spirit as one spirit); he lived within the veil (in his spirit as the practical Holy of Holies) and outside the camp (the human organization of religion)—16:6-7; 17:16; 19:21; Rom. 8:16; 2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 1:9; Phil. 3:3; Heb. 6:19-20; 13:13.

- C. In order to live in the divine history within the human history and by the divine life in our human life, we need to be vessels open to the Lord, loving Him, receiving Him, being filled with Him, and letting Him be everything to us and do everything in us, through us, and for us—Acts 9:15; 2 Cor. 4:7; Rom. 9:21, 23; cf. 2 Kings 4:1-6.
- V. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by continuing steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word; this is to live in the apostolic ministry in coordination with Christ as our great High Priest in His heavenly ministry—6:4; Heb. 7:25; 8:1-2:**
- A. By prayer we set our mind on the things above and become a reflection of Christ’s ministry in the heavens; we depend on prayer to do what man cannot do, to understand what man cannot understand, and to speak what man cannot speak—Acts 9:11; 13:1-4; Col. 3:1-3; 4:2; Eph. 6:18; Dan. 6:10; 9:2-3; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Cor. 3:6.
- B. By the ministry of the word, we impart Christ into others as the heavenly life and power so that they may be sustained with the riches of Christ to live Christ as their heavenly life on earth—Rom. 15:16; cf. Isa. 50:4-5.
- VI. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history seen in Psalm 68, which shows that Christ is the center of God’s move on the earth and the reality of God’s activities through the church—vv. 1, 24:**
- A. We need to enjoy the processed and consummated Triune God as the life-dispensing and outpoured Spirit day by day—vv. 11-13; Acts 2:46-47; 5:42; 16:5; 20:31; 28:30-31.
- B. We need to dwell in Christ as the “shore” of the evangelists for the transportation and spreading in the preaching of the gospel; on the day of Pentecost at least one hundred twenty gospel “ships,” all of whom were Galileans, set out from the “shore” to spread the gospel—Psa. 68:27; Gen. 49:13; Acts 2:7; 13:31.
- VII. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by continuing to enjoy, live, and proclaim the resurrected Christ as the firstborn Son of God and as the holy things of David, the faithful things, which are all the aspects of what Christ is as mercies to us—vv. 32-34:**
- A. Christ as the seed of David was begotten through His resurrection to be the firstborn Son of God and the life-giving Spirit as God’s sure mercies shown to David—vv. 33-35; Isa. 55:3-4.
- B. In Acts 13:34 Paul interprets God’s sure mercies in Isaiah 55:3 as “the holy things of David, the faithful things,” and in Acts 13:33 and 35 he indicates that these things are the resurrected Christ Himself as the firstborn Son of God and as the Holy One.
- C. This is also confirmed by Isaiah 55:4, which reveals that the sure mercies are Christ Himself as the Witness, Leader, and Commander to the peoples.
- D. The resurrected Christ as the firstborn Son of God and the life-giving Spirit is a great gift given by God to His chosen people, and this gift is entitled “the holy things of David, the faithful things”—Acts 13:33-34.
- E. The resurrected Christ is the mercies and blessings, the holy and faithful things, whom God gives to us as a great gift; this gift is the resurrected Christ Himself as the reality of the eternal covenant with all His unsearchable riches to be our all-inclusive grace—Isa. 42:6b; 55:3; 1 Cor. 1:9; Acts 13:43.
- VIII. If we would be in the continuation of the book of Acts, we need to continue to live in the divine history by having an upper-room consecration—1:13-14:**

- A. At the seashore Peter gave up his job to follow the Lord Jesus, but in the upper room he gave up much more—Matt. 4:18-20; Acts 1:13-14:
 - 1. He stood with the heavenly vision to give up the religion of his forefathers.
 - 2. He gave up his country, his relationship with his neighbors and friends, and his relatives, and he was willing to risk his life.
- B. The kind of consecration that we need today is an upper-room consecration, a consecration in which we pay the price to have our whole being “married” to the heavenly vision—26:19; 1:8; 20:24.
- C. If we pay the price for the heavenly vision, we will “burn the bridges behind us” and will have no way to go backward.
- D. Whether we have seen the heavenly vision or not depends on whether we are willing to pay the price to buy the anointing Spirit as the eyesalve—Rev. 3:18.
- E. To take the way of the Lord’s recovery is not cheap; this way is expensive and requires a costly consecration.
- F. We are not here for a movement but for the Lord’s recovery, and the recovery can be carried out only by the specific and extraordinary consecration in the upper room.
- G. The one hundred twenty in the upper room all became a burnt offering; they were burning for the Lord in spirit, and they burned others with the divine fire of the divine life—Luke 12:49-50; Acts 2:3-4; Rom. 12:11.
- H. When the Lord Jesus was on the earth, great crowds followed Him, but they did not afford Him anything for His move; His move was with those in the upper room, with those whose eyes had been opened and whose hearts had been touched—Acts 17:6b.
- I. It is a small number who will turn the world and change the age; if we would be in the upper room, we need to pray in a specific way and say, “Lord, I am willing to be in the upper room for the recovery of Your testimony.”