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Okay, all right now, if you have your Bibles, if you could please turn to the book of Acts, the book of Acts, Acts chapter one. And again, I just wanna thank those that are watching from by the internet. What a blessing.

And we just, just a church that would love you to know Christ and to develop your relationship with him. And we're praying that the messages you hear over this pulpit would do that. And we just wanna be a blessing to you.

And if we're a blessing to you, we would like, if God's blessed you through this ministry, you can always visit the website and just give an offering and just thank us back, amen. So we can keep this going forward. So if you're at Acts chapter one, we're gonna be looking at verse four.

We're gonna start at verse four, Acts chapter one, beginning in verse four, the word of God says, and being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the father, which saith he, ye have heard of me, for John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him saying, Lord, will thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the father had put in his own power, but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you. And ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you. We thank you for the gospel of grace.

We thank you that someone was willing to tell us how we can get to heaven. And father, what a blessing, how you've called us and have given us a purpose. And father, I ask you now that you would help each and every one of us just to understand just the few purposes that you have given us who have been called, who have accepted the Lord Jesus.

Father, those who are out watching by internet or here in the meeting house, father, I pray that you would bless them, that you would speak to them, Lord, and encourage them. And father, that they would recognize your purpose on the church and on their lives. So father, bless your word as it goes out in Jesus' precious name, amen.

Well, you can all be seated at this time. Thank you. Thank you.

So as we look here in Acts chapter one, we see in this passage of scripture, we see that the Lord's final conversation with his disciples before he ascended bodily back to heaven from the Mount of Olives. And as we see, they were asking, when will he set up the kingdom back to Jerusalem? But that was in his intent, amen. He said that in verse eight, that we would receive

power.

This is what he told the apostles and they had that power, amen. So as we look at this, I just wanna bring out a few things. God has certain purposes for us as believers and for us as the church, amen.

So as we look here in Acts chapter one, right here in this verse eight, we see that he left us here with a mission, amen. He's given us a mission and he says in Acts chapter one, verse eight, but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you. And he's speaking here to the disciples who were around him.

And then he says, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. And we seen how that little group of believers, the disciples, how they started in Jerusalem and from Jerusalem, they spread out into what? Into Judah, you know what I mean? Israel, and then from there into Samaria and then we're into the uttermost parts of the earth and we see from that time when Jesus ascended into heaven and the power came upon those disciples, they were filled to witness for Jesus and what he's done. And boy, it's been 2000 years, amen.

And we see the power of the gospel message is still going strong. We're seeing people getting saved even in these days, amen, even this year. So when we look at this, we find that we are left here with a mission to be witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ and each and every one of us, it's not just a pastor or deacons.

Listen, this is for every born again child of God. If Christ saves you, you are now a witness. You've been entered into the what? Into the body of Christ.

I like what it says in 1 Corinthians 6, verse 20. 1 Corinthians 6, look what it says in verse 20. It says, for ye are bought with a price.

Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. What's this saying? This is saying that now that you have been bought with the precious blood of Jesus, you are now what? Been called to be a witness for him. And in light of the fact that we were bought with the precious blood of Christ, we are to be witnesses to the loss around us.

You have a special influence of people around you that I could never get to. I could never talk to. Amen? Everywhere you go, you are the light and the salt.

And it's you that needs to what? Speak of what Jesus did for you. In 1 Timothy chapter one. 1 Timothy chapter one, look what it says in verse 12.

1 Timothy chapter one, hear the apostle Paul writing. And he says in 1 Timothy chapter one, verse 12. He says, and I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who had enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious, but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

Isn't that amazing? Here the apostle Paul speaks out how he was going around and in persecuting the church, not knowing that Jesus was the Christ, that Jesus was the creator God. And then he says in verse 14, and the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.

You hear what he's saying? Of whom I am chief. And then he says in verse 16, how be it for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. What a blessing.

Boy, the apostle Paul understood. He understood that when he was saved and changed that he had become a mission, a missionary, amen? He left us here on a temporary assignment to reach the lost. You know, each and every one of us, one day we're not gonna be here, we're gonna be in glory.

Amen? Well, when he saved you, why did he keep you here? You have a purpose. And that purpose is to reach those around you with the gospel by living a holy life before them, having the joy of the Lord in your heart. And like a soldier in the Middle East, who's been on, you know, he's only out there for a tour.

He doesn't stay out there. He's on a temporary assignment, just like you and I. We're on a temporary assignment. And listen, I'm here to tell you, we're in war for the souls of men.

Second Timothy chapter two, verse three enforces this. Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that wreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who had chosen him to be a soldier.

You know, now I'm reading this and it just brings back Charlie, who was just recently martyred for the truth. Amen? And it just tells me he was a soldier. He would go into enemy lines.

He would go right there where the enemy was flourishing, the colleges and the universities of America. And he would stand there speaking truth and love. And they couldn't stand it, but God used it.

And it wasn't easy. He knew his life was a threat. And his life was being threatened every day.

And of course, we know what happened. They took his life. But what a witness he was.

What a witness did he leave, amen? Listen, he was on a mission. And you and I are in the same boat. We are missionaries for God.

What? To preach, to teach, to witness. He left us here not buying our time, not to do the best we can, not to get entangled with the affairs of this life, but to be a witness, to live a different life, a holy life, amen? A pleasing life. God had a purpose.

This is his purpose. Secondly, we see he left us here to minister to one another. Look what it

says in 1 Peter chapter four, verse 10.

He left us here to minister to one another. And in 1 Peter chapter four, verse 10, the Bible says, as every man has a gift, even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. What's this saying? They're saying that when you get saved, God has given you the gift.

Everyone has a gift. And as we come together in the body of Christ, we come together working together, loving each other, building each other up. And here we come not only just to worship the Lord, but we come as a unit.

I like to call it as a care station. When the soldiers been out on the field, they come back and they've been charged up. And each and every one of you are important to that.

We have come here together for what? To charge each other up, to encourage each other. We are to minister to each other. And that means that we are to help each other.

Listen, there are people that coming in here struggling and just the words, the positive and kind words to encourage them can go a long way. Amen? And that's why we have in Hebrews chapter 10, verse 25, where it says, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as some manner of some is, but exhorting one another. And so much the more as you see the day approaching, what's the day approaching? When Christ takes the church home.

The church has been together for 2000 years, waiting for the blessed hope, the day when he comes and we are all taken away. We don't know when that happens, but guess what? Day in and day out, we are still in this battle. We're still on the mission field, reaching the lost with the gospel message.

But as it's so hard in these days that we need to come into the meeting house, gather around with like-minded brothers and sisters in Christ and encourage one another. And that's why Hebrews chapter 10, verse 25 says, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. And I'm so excited about our ministry on being on the internet and putting our sermons out on the internet.

What a blessing. We've seen so many people from around the world tuning into this little church of love here. But listen, if you're here, you must come to church, not sit down on your couch with your cup of coffee watching.

You must come together and experience the love here because you could be a difference, a different maker for somebody who's here, somebody who's struggling. You might have the right words that the Holy Spirit has given you to encourage that one. You never know.

And that's what Satan wants. He wants to keep us, what? Divided, separated, isolated. But when you come here and I know, we're in winter now.

Just the other day, it was eight degrees. It was cold, amen. But when we come in here and sometimes you say, well, I don't know.

I don't know if I should go. I've spent better to stay nice and warm. Listen, that's the time that you get up and you come because God can use you.

God has given us each, especially in these days, to be together. As it says, so much more as you see the day approaching. Man, we're seeing some rough days ahead, amen.

But listen, God wants the church to flourish in these days. And how do you do that? When you come to church, when you worship together, when you hear the word of God being preached and when you encourage one another. And that's where your batteries are charged up, amen.

John chapter 13, verse 34 says this. John chapter 13, verse 34. He says, a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

Verse 35 says, by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have loved one another. What a blessing, amen. He has a purpose for us tonight.

To be a blessing to one another by ministering to each other. You know, when you came to church today, you encouraged me being here, amen. God has a purpose.

And the last thing, and I could go on and on and on for the purpose for his church, but I have one last one here. My last point says, he left us with a motivation to please him. Amen.

Turn with me to Revelation. Yes, Revelation. The way it says in Revelation chapter four.

Revelation chapter four, right here in verse 11, says thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou has created all things and for thy pleasure they are and were created. Do you realize that when we come here together, do you realize that when God poured his Holy Spirit in us and he touched us with eternity, man, he is worthy. Amen.

He left us with a motivation to please him. Why? Because he has showed us mercy by not giving us what we deserve. You ever realized that? Man, you know, I look back at my life and I look back at all the things that I have done, all the shame that I have done, all the, oh, and God forgave me.

And if you're here tonight or you're listening tonight and you experienced that forgiveness, the mercy of God upon you, what a motivation, what a motivation to not live the way you wanna live, but to live for him, to please him. Amen. If you're saved tonight, your purpose is to please him.

Why? Because he's worthy. Look what he's done. Just today someone said, how are you doing? Yeah, my answer was better than I deserve.

You ever think of that? Better than I deserve. And yet God still loves me. We were created to

bring pleasure to our creator.

And that's the purpose for our lives. Not to bring what? Pleasure and desire for us. We were created for him.

Amen. He created us, not for us to live in sin and live in degradation and live for ourselves. We have been created to live with him in eternity and to love him and to please him with our lives and the praises on our lips.

Look what he says in Colossians chapter one. Colossians chapter one, speaking of Christ in Colossians chapter one, excuse me. Look what he says in verse 16, speaking of Jesus Christ.

It says, for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things. And by him, all things consist.

And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have preeminence. Listen, is he your savior? Is he your Lord? Is he your king? Have you placed him on the throne of your heart where he needs to be? Listen, when you do that, your life will change. Your desires will change.

Proverbs chapter 16, verse seven says this. When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. You realize that? If you are saved, you have received the greatest gift that was ever given.

It didn't come with any strings attached. All you have to do is believe. Believe what? Believe what Christ did for you.

God taking a human body to walk as a man, to without sin, and then go to a cross to die for all sin. And all you have to do is believe. Open your heart and receive him.

And I'm gonna tell you, when you do that, when you truly believe who you are, a sinner, and when you recognize who Christ is, the creator, who would go and die for you all so you could have a relationship with him. What a love story. And if you really got it, there would be a desire to live your life for him and no longer for yourself.

If you truly understand what he's done for you and how he saved you, there's a desire that happens in your heart. And we see this attitude in the Apostle Paul when he was what, a persecutor. We have the testimony when he was on the road to Damascus with letters in his hand, persecuting the church.

We see this, the Apostle Paul, we see this desire to live for Christ now. Turn with me to Galatians chapter two. Galatians chapter two, verse 20.

And a lot of you know this one. Here the Apostle Paul is writing with this attitude he has now in his heart. And he says, I am crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God who loved me. And gave himself for me.

Here, this is the Apostle Paul's attitude. He recognized who he was, a sinner. He recognized the love that Christ did when he died for him.

The mercy he showed him, the grace he poured in his heart that he says, it's not me living anymore, I'm living for him now. And Paul writes to the church with the same attitude. He's writing to the church.

He wants you and I to do the same thing, to lay down our lives as a sacrifice. Look what he says in Romans. Turn back to Romans chapter 12.

And some of you already know where I'm going. In Romans chapter 12, Paul writes to the church the same attitude. He says in Romans chapter 12 verse one, he says, I beseech you brethren, therefore brethren.

That word beseech is more like he's yearning for you to listen. He's humbled when he says, he's almost on a point of begging you to listen to what he's got to say. This is important.

And he says, I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. You hear what he's telling the church? The purpose, God's purpose for the church is to be a witness for him. Why? Because he loved us and he died for us.

The purpose, God's purpose for the church is what? To minister to each other, love one another, serve one another, encourage one another. The purpose for the church is what? To please him with our lives. And what's that? Listen, living for him, a living sacrifice.

What's a sacrifice? A sacrifice is something has to die. And that's your will. That's your desire.

That's your lust. Why? You need to remove it and place Christ, the creator God, the savior, the king of kings on the throne of your heart and serve him.

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