

# Acts: Wait for the Promise!

## Overview

It's been a little while now since I spoke probably for, I think it was for Sundays in a row about the role of the rabbi and how Jesus came among the people and he called out some young men to follow Him. It's the most interesting saga that those men never had hoped, never dreamed of, ever following a rabbi because to follow a rabbi meant that you would give up everything, literally sell out, as it were, follow him, breathe the same air, walk in the same dust with the hope that you would become like Him. And the rabbi's calling would be to instill in you that not only would you be able to mimic his thoughts, not only would you be able to repeat his interpretation of divine scripture, but that you like him would attract other young men to follow you and likewise that they would also do the same so that there would be a great army going forth that would carry out the traditions of the rabbi with the hopes that it would make a huge difference in the national future of Israel.

It was an amazing thing when Jesus said to those fishermen, follow me, in order to be a follower of a rabbi, you would have had to not quit school at the age of 12. That was the normal, that was the normal declared understanding. You will go to school until you're 12. You will be taught by a rabbi in the synagogue and at the age of 12, you'll have the option of pursuing even more and following the rabbi with the hopes of becoming a rabbi or you can go home and learn the trade of your father. So we know that there were 12 men who had different callings in life, but they never determined to be a follower of the rabbi. They got there up to the age of 12 and they were happy to go and do something else. And so you could not just decide, well, I want to follow a rabbi, a rabbi would choose who he would disciple.

So it was an amazing thing to these men when he said, he didn't say this, but he implied it. It doesn't matter that he had dropped out of school. I'm calling you now. I choose you. A rabbi, by the way, would have many young men who would want to follow him and he would look them over and he would pick out the very best and to be chosen by a rabbi to follow him was the highest calling in life, higher than a doctor, higher than a lawyer, higher than anything you can imagine because it was a divine privilege that would be bestowed upon you that a rabbi would take interest in you. So here it was that Jesus said to these men, unlearned men, I want you to follow me. And as they followed him, Jesus literally was saying to them, you know that the lifestyle of a disciple is to mimic the works, the details, the lifestyle of the rabbi.

And so I want you to follow me and I want you to do as I say, what Jesus was doing for those three years of ministry with those followers is he was laying out a template, a model for them to proceed with everything that he did, every word that he said, how he responded to those who

would attack him, how he would respond at a funeral, how he would respond at a wedding, how he responded to everything in the words of his mouth were to be mimicked by the disciples. He said to them, follow me, follow this now. He was laying out a pattern, a pattern for the church of today. He was laying out a pattern, a template for us to follow in the now, for he was very futuristic and he was planning the establishment of the church. Luke's Gospel chapter 10 says that the Lord Jesus also appointed 72 others and he sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was planning to go.

He told them, this is important. He said to them, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord, be in prayer, seek God's face, call upon the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field. So there was Jesus the rabbi saying to his disciples, as I've called you, I want you to pray that God will bring to your attention others who will also be followers because the task is monumental. The whole world he was employing has got to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He said, pray the Lord of the harvest will send out workers into the harvest field. He said, go, I'm sending you out like lambs among wolves.

He was preparing them. It's not going to be a happy task. I skipped down now in that chapter, verse 8. He said, when you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what's offered to you. Be all the sick who are there and tell them that the kingdom of God has come near you. I want to roll back again and tell you that Jesus was displaying a model and he was teaching them that they in turn would teach others who would in turn teach others for Jesus was 3 looking at the now 2023. He said, this is how I want my body, the church, to function. Go out into the harvest, compel others to join and help you, teach them what I'm teaching you.

And in effect, he was saying, I'm going to empower you. You will be able to pray for the sick and they will recover. How's the church doing? How are we doing? I want to be careful. I kind of beat myself up with this just a little bit and thought, David, don't you start making all kinds of put down statements and whatever. I'll just go this far. The book of Acts was written not by a Jew, but by a Gentile, a doctor whose name was Luke. Dr. Luke. He wrote the gospel of Luke and then he began the very first words of the book of Acts. He said, and oh, the awfulness, I'm going to continue now with this second rendition of all that Jesus began to do and teach. He's implying already in the very first couple of words in the book of Acts, Jesus began when he called the disciples and said, this is what I want you to do. He began and through the book of Acts, we see what Jesus continued to do, what he began, albeit he was no longer physically present, but in the power of the Holy Spirit, he indeed was present.

Oh, the awfulness, it's not over. I'm here to remind you, he's saying in the book of Acts, this is what God has done. He wrote this, by the way, somewhere around 60 years after the day of Pentecost. So you see what God was doing in the book of Acts, some say, well, it's, it died off. It just doesn't happen anymore. It was just the healings and the miracles and all the rest of it. It was just kind of like giving the church a jumpstart, kind of like hooking something to the battery and get it going and get going and it'll carry on a little bit just fine.

That's a fallacy. It's untrue. How could God ever expect the church of Jesus to reach around the world and do such a monumental task and take away our shovel, take away our hammer, take

away the screwdriver, take away everything from us and say, you'll get along. I was on my way to India some years ago and before I left, somebody had to give me a little something to read. And so here I was over the Atlantic heading for India to do some preaching there. Outdoor, we called it Crusades. Thousands of people would be drawn to come to listen to little old David. And as I read this article, it said, India already had six million gods. And here was that. 4 Hey, folks, I got another one for you. Like my heart sank. I thought of another God, that's just what they need. That's what they need, another one. The book of Acts begins with Theophilus. Here is what I want you to know of all that Jesus began to do and to teach.

He recalls for Theophilus that Jesus not only died, he rose again from the dead and proved he was alive. And here's the wording in the King James and I love it. He proved that he was the same one who rose again from the dead. He proved that by many infallible proofs. What does infallible mean? Impossible to argue with. Impossible to contend with. Impossible to come against it. Jesus proved he was back. Lost from the dead by the means of many infallible proofs. The book of Acts is regarded by many, many theologians and church leaders and pastors today as a wonderful little historical review of how the Holy Spirit enlightened the people at the time. They enlightened them and probably motivated them. And there they stop.

What's the value of the book of Acts, pastor? Well, it's a nice rendition of how the church got its start. Nice rendition. And they stop there. But you know this, that the evangelical church, churches and other churches that are not maybe known as evangelical are rediscovering the book of Acts. And I get articles like every day I get articles from all over the world, from people who are theologically inclined. It's the kind of reading that most of you would find boring. I have to pick them through, toss out the bones and find the meat even for myself.

But I tell you, there's a rediscovery of the book of Acts. And so now we have all your evangelical denominations and others plus who are saying we're recognizing that the book of Acts was not and is not now just for us understanding about the Holy Spirit and lightning, the Holy Spirit motivating. But the book of Acts is a series of sermons. It's valuable for instruction on how Jesus expects his church to function. It's not just a little old history book. It's not just a little old history book. It is a template. It is a roadmap. 5 It is an instruction manual. This is how Jesus began and intends us to carry on. Say amen.

I'm good till five o'clock this afternoon. I'm heated up on this one. I think you can tell. Happily heated up. The book of Acts demonstrates us, demonstrates for us that what's recorded there is not just for our enlightenment. It doesn't stop there. But the book of Acts, if you really delve in, pause, stop, read it. It takes us to another level of participation with Jesus. It takes us into another level of participation. Not just of learning and anticipating what God may want to prompt us to do, but the book of Acts is a roadmap and it's a pattern. It's a beautiful manual for how to expect, are you ready? How to expect God to show up.

I wondered this morning as I was preparing that how many churches are gathering today and what's in their mind is, I wonder what God's going to do today. They come with a sense of God imparting with God coming among us and doing what Pastor Dave does. I don't know you have to leave that with him. How many of us are anticipating that God's going to do an awesome

thing? I hope you're never going to grow weary of my continuous reference to a time in my ministry days that I can take no thanks, no praise for what happened in those days. It was literally what people call a revival.

I can tell you this three times on Sunday, two morning services and then Sunday night. And then add to that the Wednesday night. Wednesday night was almost as full as the Sunday morning services. Wednesday night I never concluded a service without inviting people to come and accept Jesus as their Savior and almost 100% of the time people came forward and surrendered their lives to Christ. It was an incredible hour. People during the services were getting instantly healed and the big time healing evangelists were present. Do you know what was going on?

Jesus, the physician, was present and all of a sudden people were amazed and you'd hear, he healed me, he healed me. There were miraculous things going on. How come pastor day that's not happening today? Because I don't think we're anticipating it. It's 11 o'clock. God shows up at 11. That's when church service starts. God's leaving at 12 and the chicken chalet is waiting and we are into a beautiful routine, not anticipating somebody's going to get divinely healed.

I don't know how far to go on this. I've spent a week on this and I'm just, I'm drowning with so many thoughts. I want to see God do some very special things. Also that I can become a hero, I can tell you that in those days that that revival was going on, I became despondent. Congregation never knew it. I became depressed and why would I do so? Because I was in over my head. I didn't know what to do next. I had no staff. Zero. People were coming through the doors like porridge. They were getting saved.

It was a glorious time and I didn't know how to do it. Be careful how you pray for revival. Do you know what that looks like? Some years ago, it didn't matter to me what you might think of certain people who were used by God in the past. We all know certain names of people that have been used in the miraculous. Many people doubt the miraculous. But if you were there like me, you can't argue with what you saw. You had to be there, honey. You had to be there.

I had just performed the wedding for my brother and his wife up in Ottawa. We left late in the evening. Catherine Coleman was staging a service in what was called the O'Keefe Center in downtown Toronto. We drove most of the night to be there. The service was to commence at 11 o'clock and we assumed they would have opened the doors at 9. We were in the streets outside the O'Keefe Center at 5 o'clock in the morning and we were a couple of thousand people too late. Sunday morning in downtown Toronto. What was it like to stand out there with thousands of people waiting for God's servant, Catherine Coleman? Thank God there were a lot of people out there who were not there to see, hear, experience this lady who was very eccentric and very different.

I think that most of the people that were there in the streets waited patiently to get into the building. This is no way it was going to handle all of us. 7 Five o'clock there were more people standing on the street than the O'Keefe Center would hold. You know why they were there? They anticipated that Jesus was going to show up. I wonder how this service would have gone if Jesus himself had walked in here today. But we had anticipated that he might take a front seat

and he'd sit there very nicely. If there was somebody in this room and he became aware that they were troubled with cancer, I wonder what might he do? Somebody's crippled and in trouble in their... Just whatever.

Well, wait a minute. He is here. Where two or three are gathered in my name, I will be there in their midst. I know this to be a fact. As we were standing out on the street, well, first of all, what was the attitude? What was the ambiance? We all started to sing. Who led it, whoever was the first to lift their voice? All of a sudden, thousands of people are singing a cappello in all the different ranges of, you know, the alto-soprano, the tenor, the bass, whatever. It was... I'm going to tell you what. It was absolutely incredible.

And they were singing amazing grace. And then they sang another song. And then they sang another song. Eventually the door was open and we got in. Now April and I found our way down and got into our seats and we were happy, we were right on the aisle. And who showed up and came and tapped me on the shoulder was a lady by the name of Carolyn Brown. Carolyn Brown's daddy was born among one of my professors at the college. So she recognized me, I recognized her. She came and she tapped me on the shoulder. She was supposed to be an usher at, well, not supposed to be. She was functioning as an usher at. Tears were running down her cheeks. She said, pastor, no, she didn't call me. She said, David, April, I got healed before the doors were open. I had an infected tooth. I'm due for surgery. I got healed already. And all of it, like that, was murmuring all over that auditorium.

People got healed in their bodies before the service ever began. Pastor, what was the difference? People came expecting to be healed and they were. That's called faith. I dare to tell you a story and some of you are just going to waste it. You're just going to say, ah, ah, ah, ah, that stretches me just a little too far. But I'll tell you what I'm up to. I'm going to tell you this story. You may not trust me after today. But I'm going to tell you the story because I remember an old Swede speaking out and saying, I were there. I were there, brother. I was there.

The man in charge of this meeting, his name was and is Keith Davis. And last evening, as I mulled over this story as to how I should tell this, I sent an email I discovered by checking out on a website. He's still the jeweler in Kelowna, ABC. He still owns international gems. He's got to be 150 years of age. But I got in touch with them and said, Keith, I need a little message from you that I can read to my congregation because nobody's going to believe this. Because he were there, along with probably plus 100 men.

So I was invited to go and speak in the interior of British Columbia at a camp grounds. It was rented by Keith Davis and a few of his friends. And they invited people from all over what's called the Okanagan. I won't name all the towns and the cities. But they came from everywhere and assembled. And I flew in and was escorted by car to the camp grounds. And there I was to pre it was 100% men. The only women on the grounds for the two ladies that were cooking in the kitchen, there were no others, I'm making a point. There were no children nearby. I did go for a walk between a couple of the services. And I noted there wasn't a house, there wasn't a farm. These were mountains. Nobody lived around here. That's an important point. Nobody lived there. It was a campground. It was Saturday night. It was wonderful singing. All these men sing like a

choir.

We had a couple of fellas there that were just incredible keyboardists like this gentleman. And these guys were also songsters. So they had a wonderful way of leading in the workshop. I'm going to tell you what it was heavenly. Beautiful. And these men were from all denominations. There were guys who identified them. Now there were Baptists, they were Alliance. There were some nutty penny costals. I mean, it was quite a mixed bag of nuts. Now I pause to tell you that what happened to me that night as I preached has happened two times in my life. First time that I recall that it happened, the only other time, I was preaching at a Bible college in Peterborough.

And in the middle of my sermon, my legs disappeared. By that, I mean they were no longer there. They were still attached to my body, but they weren't holding me up. I literally lost the ability to stand. And for the moment, I was filled with fear. Like, what's this? Because I ended up on the platform in front of a whole college audience on the floor and really almost unable to move. And there were people who raced up and, well, the president of that college went to be together. We'd have to find somebody who would remember that it was there. Somebody who remembered that was your son, Pastor Peter.

Sean was in the audience and he would remember when Dave Forrest collapsed on the platform and a whole bunch of people picked him up and carried him out. There were nurses fanning me. Somebody was taking my blood pressure. Somebody was ready to give me mouth to mouth. She looked pretty, so I was tempted to go, I'm sorry, I shouldn't. That messes the whole thing up. Time to dismiss, let's go home. So it happened on that occasion in the middle of my sermon, crash, I hit the platform.

You know where this is going now? I'm on this platform. There's all these men sitting in this beautiful, large, a very wooden archaic auditorium. We'd had a time and I'm preaching. And just as I'm coming to the conclusion, it happened. I hit the deck and nobody knew what to do about me. Me, meanwhile, men had already started coming forward just because they wanted to. They just, they were just drawn like a magnet and they came and they stood all across the front. I'm on the ground. I'm on the floor. I can't figure out what's going on, but I do have their record. Yeah, I've been there before. There were chairs back here. I crawled on all fours and I had to use my upper body to pull myself up under the chair.

There were people who watched me do that. I sat on the chair and like I'm in charge of what's going on here and I can't do anything. I can't move. And nobody knew what to do now. Nobody knew how to react. Somebody probably said, what's he up to now? I wonder what he's going to do? I wonder if his cell phone's working. You know, like I'm just sitting there. Nobody wanted to mess with it. Everybody's after. All of a sudden I saw a man go, crash on the floor. And I thought, he's got the same virus. I never understood how people fall backwards. Is that strange? They always fall backwards. I'm talking to Penny Cossle here for the most part. Why don't they fall frontwards and do a face plant? I don't know.

Anyway, bang. Then another one. Then another one. Then another one. Then another one. And now all the men who are standing here are laying on their backs. Alliance, Baptist, whatever,



whatever. And as I'm sitting there, I'm immobilized. I can't move. And coming out of their mouths was what we would call gibberish. I told you you're going to think I'm cracked.

Service went on and on. And the last people to leave that auditorium that night, it was actually one o'clock in the morning. And the story came back to me that the first guy who fell, they had to literally carry him to his cabin. Story ain't over, hun. Following morning Keith, the jeweler in charge, said, you know, that was an outstanding meeting last night. He said, I didn't quite know how to, I didn't know what to do. He says, Brother Dave took his chair and we didn't know where he obviously didn't know what he was. What was he going to do? He said, if God did something for you in this service last night, would you come up here and we just want to hear about it?

The men lined up quite a crew of them. I think it was a second or third person who came to the microphone and he said, you know, the stuff that went on here last night, I've been taught, don't even go near that stuff. He said, I've been taught, you people are crazy. He said, but I came here because my wife said I had to. I had a fishing trip planned, it got canceled and she said, well, I got my plans for the weekend, so you're gone. Why don't you join that group from the Alliance Church? Why don't you go? So he said, that's why I was here. He said that nutcase preaching last night.

He said, I never heard anything like that in my life, but he said, I felt drawn to go to the front and pray and surrender my heart to Jesus, because I haven't been living the way I should have. He says, I went forward and he says, and the preacher ignored me. I would have thought he'd come and pray for me. He said, no, he just sat there like a bump on a chair. And then he said these words, thank God for that blonde little child who came along. And he said, as that little fellow stood on this stage, you see this man standing down there? He describes a blonde child coming here and he said, he reached out and he said, when he touched my forehead, he said, it was like I got kicked by a mule. He said, I had no option. I was going down. He said, I couldn't get up.

The man after him came to the microphone and he said, I had to experience just like that fellow. He said, that little child touched me and I fell down. And then another one, and then another one, and he stops the whole thing. He said, wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute. You guys all saw a child. What did he look like? Well, he was blonde. He was this. He was that. He said, well, I was sitting right there. I didn't see any child. Anybody else see the child and just the men who had come forward among them and not all of them? They raised their hand. He said, OK, this is the man's weekend. There's only two ladies in the dining hall cooking and he said, they didn't come with kids.

There's no houses around here. There aren't even any cattle ranches. Who is hiding a kid in your cabin? There wasn't any. There wasn't any. Dave, what do you think it was? You tell me. You tell me. Most pastors across this country, if they heard this story, tell me this one, they'd go. Yeah, there's probably some kind of an explanation. Just like they did when Jesus raised the dead, opened the blind eye, they were over it. Yeah, yeah, OK, well, sure, sure, sure. You see, some things never change. But my little wife who's not here this morning, for the sake of those who might be visiting, have never heard this.

And I'm not going to tell the whole story. My wife had a tumor inside her, the size of an inflated football. It was cancer. It was too late by the time they figured out what it was for them to do surgery. And the doctor said, I'm sorry, David. I said, tell me she's not going to die. He said, yeah. She's very much alive today. Did the cancer go into remission? Yeah, I guess so. That was over 50 years ago. That's a long remission. She gave birth to the tumor in response to one lady who came into the hospital and prayed for my wife. How come God didn't answer your prayer, David?

He wanted to use somebody else. I was feeling sorry for myself down the end of the hall. I was totally deflated. I felt totally wasted. I felt like I was a failure. I was a failure as a husband, as a pastor. My wife's dying. I can do nothing about it. I was just swamped. I was drowning. And a lady from the church came. Two bus rides walked in that hospital and prayed for my little April. She's had several high, high physicians, both Canada and United States who have interviewed her and talked to her and said, we can identify the cancer and you are the only survivor known to this day.

The man who was in charge of McMaster University Medical Center, he was establishing it. That's how far back the story goes. He contacted me in Vancouver. Doesn't matter the year 2008, called me. I went over to his house. He's very elderly. He's gone to be with Jesus by now. He said, David, I was in charge of establishing the facility. And he said, I got a call from St. Joseph's hospital from a friend of mine who said, John, get your students over here. Get all the into. You gotta see this. And he said, we hired taxis. He said, by the way, how's April today? He wanted to know how April was. He knew her name. Never met her. But he said, that was an incredible miracle. He said, I'm Presbyterian and David, I believe in miracles. I've seen them. So I just bring this to you today.

Today, as I close, to remind you, we need to be expecting God to do things. We must not have church as it was. Church as it might be. We need to anticipate a song being fulfilled. We used to sing this song when I was a kid. Jesus is passing this way, this way today. Jesus is passing this way. He's passing this way today. I want to believe that. Well, I'm going to close this service because my time is gone. Heavenly Father, what a joy to be in this house today. Thank you, Lord Jesus, because everybody in this room can probably tell a story about the miraculous interventions by God. And Lord, if there's anybody in this room who's never known of, never been around, never had any experience whatsoever, I honestly believe that they would say, oh, I wish. Oh, how I'd like to be in a place. How I'd like to see it.

How I, Lord, this is what we long for. This is what we long for. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for your divine intervention in every area of our lives. I pray, Lord God, that as a preacher, as David, just David, I pray, Lord God, that I will be always expecting Jesus to show up. And may I never, oh Lord, try and construct it. Never try to manipulate it because that is just a sickening thought. We don't have to help God. We just need to let God help us to do so. We pray this prayer in Jesus' name. Now we have a tradition here. Most of you know where this is going. We never leave this house without praying for someone.