

“Good News”: A Series in the Gospels (Part 6)

The Gospel of Luke tells the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. The companion to the Gospel account Luke wrote was Acts, which retells the work of Jesus’ Spirit after His ascension, and the story of the movement of people He inspired.

Summary of Acts 1-7:

The book of Acts shows how God fulfilled His ancient promises to restore His blessing to all the nations through the offspring of Abraham: Jesus of Nazareth. In chapters 1-7, we explore how Jesus and the Spirit renew the people of Israel and prepare them to announce good news to the nations.

Luke- Life, Death & Resurrection of Jesus

Acts- What Jesus CONTINUED to do after His resurrection (through His Spirit)

The stage is set with a resurrected Jesus continuing to teach his disciples about the “Good News” of His upside-down Kingdom. This is a new creation that Jesus launches through His death and resurrection. Naturally, the disciples are excited and are ready to go tell the world but Jesus tells them to wait and stay in Jerusalem until they receive a new kind of power with which they can be faithful witnesses to Jesus and His kingdom.

Acts 1:8 (NLT)

“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.”

God’s Presence as “Fire” in the OT:

Exodus 3:2-6 (The Burning Bush- Moses on Mount Sinai- God’s Covenant with man and the giving of the Ten Commandments)

Exodus 3:2-6 (NLT)

“There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn’t burn up. “This is amazing,” Moses said to himself. “Why isn’t that bush burning up? I must go see

it.” When the Lord saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, “Moses! Moses!” “Here I am!” Moses replied. “Do not come any closer,” the Lord warned. “Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your father —the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.”

Exodus 40:38 (Pillar of Fire over the Tabernacle)

Exodus 40:38 (NLT)

“The cloud of the Lord hovered over the Tabernacle during the day, and at night fire glowed inside the cloud so the whole family of Israel could see it. This continued throughout all their journeys.”

And so thousands of people that experience this moment at the Pentecost festival respond to Peter’s preaching and are saved and baptized in Jesus’ name.

Israel has been rejecting God’s representatives for centuries and so their rejection of Jesus and now His followers, is a rejection of God Himself.

As dark as this moment appears, Luke includes within it seeds of hope as we are introduced to a new character in the story, a religious leader named Saul, who many of us know as Paul.

God is always in the business of bringing “Good News.”