

# Unashamed Witness

Acts 1:1-8

**Unashamed Witness—We will not shrink back from proclaiming Jesus Christ nor suffering for His name.**

In the early church, Luke was an early church historian who wrote two books in the Bible. One was the Gospel of Luke in which he wrote about the birth, life, teachings, miracles, suffering, death, burial, and RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ. In his second book, Luke carefully chronicles the Acts of the Apostles.

## Acts 1:1-8

*In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach <sup>2</sup> until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. <sup>3</sup> After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.*

*<sup>4</sup> On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup> For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”*

The word “baptize” in the Greek is *baptizo*. It was actually NOT a Christian word. It was a secular term used in everyday life. It meant simply “to dip, plunge, or immerse” something. Jesus said that as His disciples were baptized with the Holy Spirit they would receive POWER. At the end of his gospel, Luke recorded the words of Jesus this way:

*<sup>49</sup> I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49)*

Why? Why did they need “power from on high”? We’ll answer that question in verse 8, but first Jesus has to navigate a question that was bubbling up in the hearts of His disciples. Verse 6:

*<sup>6</sup> Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”*

*<sup>7</sup> He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.*

(in other words, stay focused on why I am leaving you here!)

***<sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”***

In verse 8, we see that Jesus makes clear what was going to happen when the Holy Spirit came upon them. Jesus’ desire for His disciples was that they would be His witnesses. And to do so with power. The word “power” here in the Greek is *dunamis*. It’s a very important term in the New Testament. It shows up in fact, about 120 times. It means “power to perform”.

Let’s be honest... I’m not sure it requires the same level of “dunamis” to be *worshippers* in here as *witnesses* out there. We need the “dunamis” of the Holy Spirit.

## **STORIES OF UNASHAMED WITNESS**

### **Around the World Today**

Open Doors, an international advocacy group supporting persecuted Christians and churches worldwide, estimates that over 365 million Christians worldwide are facing high levels of persecution and pressure today.

“I am pleading with our dear brothers and sisters in Christ to help me pray that God will help me to provide for our four remaining children that are with me after my wife dies, and for God to encourage them to hold on to Him and never turn back.”—Pastor Zachariah, who lost his wife and son in an attack on his village in May 2023.

Check out more info and stories: [www.opendoors.org](http://www.opendoors.org) and [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com)

### **You Will Be Like Sheep Among Wolves (Matthew 10:16-39)**

### **Stories of the Apostles (Acts 3, 4:10b-12; 5:41-42)**

Church, we are called to be a church of UNASHAMED WITNESS. A church that will not shrink back from declaring the name of Jesus Christ, nor suffering for His name. But, HOW will we do this?

I believe it requires two ministries of the Holy Spirit among us:

1. A Deep Convicting Work of the Holy Spirit
2. A Fresh Empowering Work of the Holy Spirit

### **Questions for Personal Reflection/Group Discussion**

- 1.) Why do you think it requires the “dunamis” of God for His children to be bold, unashamed witnesses of Jesus Christ?
- 2.) How does it make you feel when you struggle to be bold in your witness?
- 3.) Based on the example of the early church, how might we pray when we are struggling to be bold in our witness?
- 4.) Pastor Jim suggested there are two ministries of the Holy Spirit which are required for us to be bold and unashamed in our witness. What are they?
- 5.) Which of these two ministries do you need the Holy Spirit to minister to your heart today?