

Propagating the Resurrected Christ under the Heavenly Ministry of the Ascended Christ

Acts is a book right between the four Gospels and the Epistles, and it doesn't belong to either of these; it is a link from the Gospels to the Epistles, a transitional book involving a dispensational transfer. In the four Gospels we see the **individual Christ** as God's way and means for Him to move on earth; in Acts, however, there's a transfer – now we have a **corporate Christ**, the Body of Christ, who is God's means to carry out His economy on earth. Today we are and should be in reality the means for God to carry out His economy; **we need to cooperate with Him** to remove any limitation that we may have placed on Him in the matter of **propagating the resurrected Christ** in His ascension.

In Acts we see a transition from **the earthly ministry of Christ** (of which the four Gospels speak abundantly) and **the heavenly ministry of Christ** (of which the remaining 23 books of the New Testament speak). Since the book of Acts is the **beginning** of the heavenly ministry of Christ, the emphasis is on propagation; the resurrected and ascended Christ needs to be propagated, spread, and increase all over the earth. What we see in the book of Acts is not a physical Christ who has many followers and increases His following through these; rather, Acts – as a direct continuation of the gospel of Luke – focuses on a resurrected and ascended Christ who is being **propagated** through the disciples. Now Christ is in His heavenly ministry; He is no longer in His earthly ministry but in His heavenly ministry, and now He is busy doing many things. Luke wrote the first book, his gospel, to tell us concerning Christ's earthly ministry and life, and he wrote the book of Acts to unveil the living and ministry of the resurrected and ascended Christ. On earth the Lord lived as a God-man, expressing the bountiful God in His rich attributes through His human virtues for thirty-three and a half years; but now in His ascension He was initiated in His heavenly ministry, a new realm, where He ministers.

Christ is ruling over the entire world situation for His economy to be carried out, for His propagation to be carried out; He does this both for us **individually** and on **a global scale**. Christ sovereignly rules in our environment, arranging a lot of things in order for us to hear the gospel and receive His salvation. We shouldn't believe that what is happening in the world today is by accident or by chance, neither should we think that it's the result of some wars, man's decision in elections, or some rulers making certain choices. There's an invisible **scene** behind the visible scene, and **the Leader** is operating in the entire world situation so that man can be saved and that the resurrected Christ can be propagated. Christ orchestrates the world situation – including the boundaries of nations, the rulers of the nations, and the relative power of the nations, so that the gospel may be spread and His kingdom would increase. It is He who changes the times and the seasons; He deposes kings, and He causes kings to ascend.

How can we cooperate with the heavenly ministry of the ascended Christ? In order for us to cooperate with the heavenly ministry of the ascended Christ for the propagation of the resurrected Christ, we need to know the intrinsic significance of the book of Acts. The book of Acts doesn't talk of the "acts of the apostles"; rather, what we see in Acts is the propagation of the resurrected Christ in His ascension through the disciples by the Spirit for the producing of the churches, the kingdom of God. In particular, the first aspect of the intrinsic significance of the book of Acts is that in it we see **a move fully in the Spirit**, that is, a move in the resurrected and ascended Christ.

In the book of Acts we see the disciples who were with the Lord and who now have received Him as their life; they are a group of people who are resurrected and ascended with Christ, having Him within them as their life and upon them as their power and authority (see John 20:22; Acts 1:8). As the continuation of the book of Acts, we as believers in Christ are a group of people who were resurrected and ascended with Christ, **having Christ as our life within and upon us as our power**. We are daily learning to live and act not according to knowledge, doctrine, teaching, rules, regulations, forms, or traditions, but according to the living **Christ within us and upon us**.

In the book of Acts we see that the disciples were regenerated by the Triune God and also they were inaugurated with authority; they were baptized in the Holy Spirit as power, and they had the Spirit within them for their living, and whatever they did and said, it was by the Christ within. Christ breathed into them the Holy Spirit on the day of His resurrection, and He descended upon them as the Holy Spirit as power for their work. Through His death and resurrection, **the resurrected Christ was propagated** – He was enlarged, and now He moves through the corporate Christ, the group of people resurrected and ascended with Christ having Christ as their life within and power without. Christ in resurrection and ascension is our life within and He covers us as power.

The book of Acts, from chapter 2 onwards, shows us **the divine stream**, the unique flow; throughout the Bible there's only one stream of the Lord's work, one current of the Lord's move, and only **one flow**. From Genesis to Revelation God is doing **one thing** and moving into **one direction**, and there is only **one unique divine stream**. The early disciples moved, acted, and worked in the flow; there were never two currents in the flow but always one. All those whom the Lord raised up were sooner or later brought into the flow. Believers such as Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Mark, Aquila, Priscilla, Apollos, and others were raised up by the Lord and brought into this one stream. There is only one flow of God from the throne of God, and there is only one stream – the divine stream; we need to make sure that **what we do is in that flow**. There is a lot of Christian work going on, and much of it may not be in the flow. In Acts we see that the flow started from Jerusalem, spread to Samaria, Antioch, Eastern Europe (Macedonia), Western Europe (Rome), and then flowed throughout the earth.

We need to realize that we are not just Christians – we are a group of people who are resurrected and ascended with Christ, having Christ within us as our life and Christ upon us as our power and authority. Therefore, we need to live a life not by our natural human life but by the Triune God within us as our life, and we need to act by the Triune God as our strength, power, and authority. Many believers think that the way the kingdom of God is spread today is by preaching the gospel, that is, by doing a work for God, and for this they need to be **prepared, trained, and qualified as “gospel preachers” and “Bible teachers”**. But the disciples in Acts **did not** go to a Bible seminary, neither were they trained how to preach the gospel or raised up churches. Rather, the Lord Jesus as the ascended Head of the Body uses **a particular way to propagate Himself** on earth: He uses a group of **witnesses**, the first-hand account witnesses who were with Him and to whom He has appeared to.

Conclusion

For us to testify of Christ we first need to have experiences of seeing and enjoyment concerning the Lord and spiritual things. What we need is not more teachings or doctrines; we need more seeing, more enjoyment, and more experience of Christ, and then we will spontaneously testify. For example, if you like football and see a great football game, when you recollect it and tell others you will be very excited about it; others may not be that excited, but you were there, you saw it with your own eyes. The Lord wants us to see Him, enjoy Him, be with Him, and experience Him, and then we will spontaneously testify of what we have enjoyed of Him and experienced of Him, and the result is that He is being propagated on earth. *(Excerpt from the Ministry of the Word, Cooperating with the Heavenly Ministry of the Ascended Christ)*