

July 3–9. Acts 1–5: “Ye Shall Be Witnesses unto Me”

The Resurrected Christ Teaches For Forty Days

The author of Acts (Luke) briefly describes the 40 days that Christ spends with His disciples after His resurrection

Acts 1:1-5, 8

[1] The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

[2] Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

[3] To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

[4] 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.

[5] For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

[8] But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

What were some of the things that Jesus did while He tarried in Jerusalem for 40 days?

(he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles
he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs
speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God)

David B. Haight

“Perhaps no clearer declaration of fact has ever been made than those which tell of the literal resurrection of Christ. The record of appearances to the Apostles during the forty days following his resurrection—as a group or separately, to teach them ‘the things pertaining to the kingdom of God’ leaves no cause for doubt. John informs us that ‘there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written, . . . even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written’ (John 21:25).” (CR, April 1985)

Aurelius Miner

“The Savior [taught] for forty days prior to his ascension, and it is to be presumed that Christ gave [his] Apostles every particle of instruction they needed, for he cannot be accused directly or indirectly of leaving his work

half done. For, says Christ, What more could I have done that I have not done? He gave them all the instruction needed to go forth as teachers and ministers to all nations and peoples.” (JD, 20:229)

Why did Christ want them to wait until they received Holy Ghost?

(ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you)

Dallin H. Oaks

“He told them, ‘Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.’ However, he cautioned them that their witnessing would be after they had received the Holy Ghost.

“An eyewitness was not enough. Even the witness and testimony of the original Apostles had to be rooted in the testimony of the Holy Ghost. [Joseph Fielding Smith] told us that the witness of the Holy Ghost makes an impression on our soul that is more significant than ‘a visitation of an angel’. And the Bible shows that when we testify on the basis of this witness, the Holy Ghost testifies to those who hear our words.” (CR, Oct. 1990)

Lets read the account of Christ ascending into heaven

Acts 1:9-12

[9] And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

[10] And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

[11] Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

[12] Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

Ezra Taft Benson

“He had told his followers that he must soon ascend unto his Father in heaven. And as the time of his ascension drew nigh, the Lord in that last solemn interview gave his parting instructions to his disciples.... And while he yet spoke he rose from their midst until a cloud received him from out of their sight...

“Worshipfully, and with great joy the Apostles returned to Jerusalem. The Lord's ascension was accomplished. It was truly a literal departure of a material being, as his resurrection had been an actual return of his spirit to his own physical body. Now the disciples began to comprehend more fully that he had truly overcome the world.... There was victory over the grave,

always, until then, the final conqueror of all men.” (CR, April 1964)

Why do you think it is significant that Christ ascended from the Mount of Olives?

Bruce R. McConkie

“On this Mount is the Garden called Gethsemane where Jesus in agony took upon himself the sins of the world; here he now ascends in triumphant glory; and here he shall return in that same glory to begin his reign as Israel’s King.” (DNTC 2:28)

Ordained a New Apostle

Acts 1:15-17,21-26

[15] And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (th number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

[16] Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

[17] For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

[21] Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

[22] Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

[23] And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

[24] And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,

[25] That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

[26] And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

From verse 22- What is an apostle “ordained to be a witness” of?

(with us of his resurrection)

D&C 107:23

The twelve traveling councilors are called to be the Twelve Apostles, or special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world—thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling.

Some quotes from modern-day apostles

Boyd K. Packer.

"The Twelve Apostles ‘are called to be... special witnesses of the name of

Christ in all the world.' Each carries that certain witness that Jesus is the Christ." ("The Twelve Apostles," Ensign, Nov. 1996)

Henry B. Eyring

"I am grateful that I know as surely as did the Apostles Peter, James, and John that Jesus is the Christ, our risen Lord, and that he is our advocate with the Father." ("Witnesses for God", Ensign, Nov. 1996)

Ezra Taft Benson

"As one of those called as special witnesses, I add my testimony to those of fellow Apostles: He lives! He lives with resurrected body. There is no truth or fact of which I am more assured, or know better by personal experience, than the truth of the literal resurrection of our Lord." ("Five Marks of the Divinity of Jesus Christ," Ensign Dec. 2001)

James E. Faust

"Mine is the certain knowledge that Jesus is our divine Savior, Redeemer, and the son of God the Father. I know of his reality by a sure perception so sacred I cannot give utterance to it." (CR, April 1995)

Spencer W. Kimball

"I know that God lives. I know that Jesus Christ lives,' said John Taylor, my predecessor, 'for I have seen him.' I bear this testimony to you." ("Strengthening the Family", Ensign, May 1978)

Boyd K. Packer

"I bear my witness that the Savior lives. I know the Lord. I am His witness. I know of His great sacrifice and eternal love for all of Heavenly Father's children. I bear my special witness in all humility but with absolute certainty" ("The Witness", Ensign, May 2014)

Day of Pentecost

The Day of Pentecost is when the disciples of Christ receive the gift of the Holy Ghost

The Pentecost was a harvest celebration held 50 days after Passover. From a word that means 50th. Now synonymous with outpouring of the Spirit

Acts 2:1-8

[1] And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

[2] And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

[3] And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

[4] And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other

tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

[5] And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

[6] Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

[7] And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

[8] And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

Now, with the gift of the Holy Ghost, Christ's disciples were able to do the work that He had commanded them to do

Kim B. Clark

“Jesus fulfilled that promise: beginning with the day of Pentecost, the disciples were blessed with the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost. Through their faith in Christ, repentance, and obedience, the Holy Ghost became their companion, changed their hearts, and blessed them with an abiding witness of the truth.

“These gifts and blessings strengthened the Lord's disciples. Although the times they lived in were dangerous and confusing, they received the spiritual gift of eyes to see and ears to hear. By the power of the Holy Ghost, they began to see the truth of things as they really are, especially of the Lord Jesus Christ and His work among them. The Holy Ghost enlightened their understanding, and they heard the voice of the Lord more clearly. The gospel of Jesus Christ sank deep into their hearts. They were steadfast and obedient. They preached the gospel with boldness and power and built up the kingdom of God. They had joy in the Lord Jesus Christ.” (CR, Oct. 2015)

What do we learn about the purpose of speaking in tongues from verses 5-8?

(the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language)

Joseph Smith

"The gift of tongues by the power of the Holy Ghost in the Church, is for the benefit of the servants of God to preach to unbelievers, as on the day of Pentecost." (TPJS, pg. 195)

"The ultimate design of tongues is to speak to foreigners, and if persons are very anxious to display their intelligence, let them speak to such in their own tongues [that is in the tongues of the foreigners]." (TPJS pg. 248)

To help the people present better understand what was happening and affirm that this was a blessing from God, Peter quotes a passage from Joel where he prophesied that this manifestation of the Spirit would take place

Acts 2:14-18

[14] But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

[15] For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

[16] But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

[17] And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

[18] And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Peter takes advantage of this gathering caused by spiritual outpouring to exercise his calling as witness of Christ.

Acts 2:22-24,32-33

[22] Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

[23] Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

[24] Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

[32] This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

[33] Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

Since Jesus had been resurrected and exalted, by what power were these marvelous events made possible?

(received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear)

Those present now understood that Jesus was the promised Savior. Peter told them that they could also have the gift of the Holy Ghost

Acts 2:37-41

[37] Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

[38] Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

[39] For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off,

even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

[40] And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

[41] Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

What do you think caused their hearts to be pricked?

They hadn't accepted Jesus was the Christ and now the Holy Ghost was making it know to them

Diana Dunkley

"This New Testament account illustrates two of many ways in which the power of the Holy Ghost may be manifested: in the first instance, through the miracle of a 'rushing mighty wind' and 'cloven tongues'; in the second, through the subtle spiritual 'pricking' of hearts.

"As members of the Church, we can have the Holy Ghost as our personal guide if we live worthily. I have learned that for me the promptings of the Holy Ghost most often come in subtle ways similar to how the promptings came to those who heard Peter's testimony. Those who look only for 'cloven tongues of fire' may not recognize the Spirit when it pricks their hearts."
("Hearing the Still, Small Voice," Ensign, July 1996)

How would you summarize Peter's reply to their question "what shall we do"?

The first four principles of the Gospel

N. Eldon Tanner

"Having faith in Christ is essential to our salvation, and it is our responsibility and privilege to repent of our sins and follow him. Peter, on the day of Pentecost when he was asked, '... Men and brethren, what shall we do?' answered, '... Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'...

"In order to make effective these ordinances which are so essential according to the words of the Savior himself, it logically follows that they must be administered by those having authority to administer the ordinances." (CR, April 1963)

What evidence is given that Peter's plain and simple explanation of gospel principles led to those present accepting Christ?

(they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls)

George Q. Cannon

“It is quite clear that all the inhabitants of the earth had a claim on this promise on complying with the conditions prescribed—namely, faith in Jesus Christ, repentance of their sins, being baptized for their remission, and having hands laid upon them for the reception of the Holy Ghost.

“This was the Gospel which Peter preached unto the people on the Day of Pentecost, and several thousands of them went forth and were baptized on that occasion. We find, by examining the ‘Acts of the Apostles,’ that this was the nature of their teaching on every occasion when preaching to the people, and we also find that when the people did comply with these requirements the Holy Ghost did rest upon them.” (JD, 14:45)

Righteousness abounded in the Church and the people were truly blessed

Acts 2:42-47

[42] And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

[43] And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

[44] And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

[45] And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

[46] And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

[47] Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Since the early Church was steadfast in doctrine and fellowship -

What principle did they practice to assure that the needs of all were met?

(had all things common

sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need)

Sterling W. Sill

"The scriptures speak about an interesting religious practice that has sometimes been used over the ages to promote the economic welfare of people. This program has been known by various names, such as the United Order, the Order of Enoch, the Law of Consecration....

"This economic order was also practiced for a time in the days of Jesus. In Acts 2 we find this reference: 'And all that believed were together, and had all things common.' The scripture also says: 'And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.'" (The Wealth of Wisdom, pg. 208-210)

Ministry of Peter and the Apostles

Acts 3:1-10

[1] Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

[2] And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

[3] Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

[4] And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

[5] And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

[6] Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

[7] And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength.

[8] And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

[9] And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

[10] And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate

What did Peter and John have that they were able to give this man?

The priesthood and the faith of the lame man

Howard W. Hunter

“I testify of God’s goodness and Christ’s power, and of the privilege Apostles have been given. I know that Peter and John did take a lame man by the right hand and, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, command him to rise up and walk—and he did walk. I testify of the restoration of the gospel in these latter days and of the priesthood powers that make possible the many modern miracles of our dispensation.” (CR, April 1989)

Jorge T. Becerra

“In reading this account, I was intrigued by the use of the word fastening. The word fastening means to direct one’s eyes or thoughts to or to look intently at. As Peter looked at this man, he saw him differently than others. He looked past his inability to walk and his weaknesses and could discern that his faith was adequate to become healed and enter into the temple to receive the blessings he was seeking.” (CR, April 2021)

What does Peter’s statement teach us about how we can help and serve others?

Peter had something more valuable than money he could give
(Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee)

Spencer W. Kimball

"Such as I have.' All of us need to ponder those words. Do we, too, have something we need to share? Yes! We have the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel of peace, the gospel of joy. We have truths that can make any person better and more fulfilled, any marriage happier and sweeter, any home more heavenly. It is to ourselves, our homes, our quorums, our classes, our Church assignments that we must carry more energetically those things that we have received. And it is to our nonmember neighbors and associates that we are now asked to also 'give such as we have.' The Lord has commanded us to do so. We must lengthen our stride and must do it now." ("Always a Convert Church", Ensign, Sept. 1975)

Harold B. Lee

"Peter just didn't content himself by commanding the man to walk, but he 'took him by the right hand, and lifted him up.'

"Will you see that picture now of that noble soul, that chiefest of the apostles, perhaps with his arms around the shoulders of this man, and saying, 'Now, my good man, have courage. I will take a few steps with you. Let's walk together, and I assure you that you can walk, because you have received a blessing by the power and authority that God has given us as men, his servants.' Then the man leaped with joy.?" ("Stand Ye in Holy Places", Ensign, Oct. 2008)

Verses 9 & 10 state:

“all the people saw him walking and praising God:
And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate”

Peter makes it clear that this man was healed by the power of Jesus Christ. The same Jesus that they had caused to be put to death

Acts 3:12-19

[12] And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

[13] The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.

[14] But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

[15] And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

[16] And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

[17] And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your

rulers.

[18] But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

[19] Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

Note that Peter acknowledges that they were ignorant of who Jesus was when they had Him killed. And now they had the opportunity repent and have that sin blotted out

Clifford E. Young

“This is an impressive lesson. It is a lesson to you and me, who have been made partakers of the truth. Much is expected of us, because we know. Jesus made it clear. Peter made it clear that in cases of ignorance, the Lord would be merciful, and kind, and just but with those who know and who have the responsibility, it is a different matter. It is knowledge that brings responsibility.” (CR, April 1953)

This miracle and Peter’s teaching had a great impact on the people

Acts 4:4

Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

It also had a great impact on Jewish leaders and they wanted to put a stop to it

Acts 4:5-14

[5] And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes,

[6] And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

[7] And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

[8] Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

[9] If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

[10] Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

[11] This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

[12] Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

[13] Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

[14] And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say

nothing against it.

It hardly seems like the same Peter who just weeks earlier slept while Jesus suffered in Gethsemane and then denied Him 3 times.

What do you think changed Peter into the fearless and devoted advocate for Christ?

(Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost)

Acts 1:8

[8] But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Peter thanked the Lord in prayer for this great blessing they had received

Acts 4:31,33

[31] And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

[33] And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

The Lord continued to show His power and bless His church

Acts 5:12-16

[12] And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

[13] And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

[14] And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

[15] Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

[16] There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.