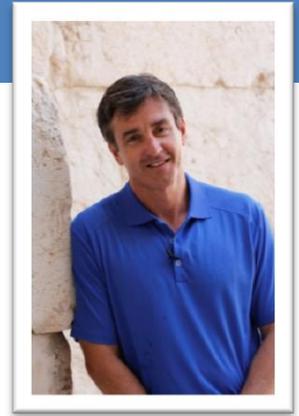


Pastor Allen Jackson

I. Lessons from Acts

A. Receiving Jesus' Commands

Acts 1:3-5 (NIV[®])

³ After his suffering, he showed himself to these men 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. ⁴ 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. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

1. Invitations accepted

Matthew 4:19-20 (NIV[®])

¹⁹ "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

2. Invitations declined

Matthew 19:20-22 (NIV[®])

²⁰ "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?" ²¹ Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. **Then come, follow me.**" ²² When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

B. Cooperate with the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:7-9 (NIV[®])

⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ 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." ⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Acts 2:16-17 (NIV[®])

¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

C. Expect a Miracle

Acts 3:1-10 (NIV[®])

¹ One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer--at three in the afternoon. ² Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. ³ When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for

money. ⁴ Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" ⁵ So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. ⁶ Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." ⁷ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. ⁸ He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. ⁹ When all the people saw him walking and praising God, ¹⁰ they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Hebrews 13:7-8 (NIV[®])

⁷ Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.**

D. Reverence and Respect for God Increases

Acts 5:7-11 (NIV[®])

⁷ About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price." ⁹ Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." ¹⁰ At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ **Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.**

E. Push Back

Acts 5:16-21 (NIV[®])

¹⁶ Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed. ¹⁷ Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, **were filled with jealousy.** ¹⁸ **They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.** ¹⁹ But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. ²⁰ **"Go, stand in the temple courts," he said, "and tell the people the full message of this new life."** ²¹ At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people. When the high priest and his associates arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin--the full assembly of the elders of Israel--and sent to the jail for the apostles.

Acts 17:4-5 (NIV[®]) [in Thessalonica]

⁴ Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women. ⁵ But the Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.

F. Expanding Arenas of Opportunity

Acts 10:34-38 (NIV[®])

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism ³⁵ but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. ³⁶ You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ³⁷ You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached-- ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, Pour out your Spirit in this generation. Turn the hearts of your people back to you. Awaken the Church to listen. Give us boldness to proclaim the truth about Jesus of Nazareth—open doors of opportunity. Bring those with abilities and resources to help to join with us.

Forgive us for our pride and idolatry. Our hope is in our God. We ask all this in Jesus' name, amen.