

Skegness Community Church - Weekly Bible Study 2025

52 passages of Scripture that every believer should know

Week 36 - BACK TO BASICS: Acts 1:8

“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”

When Christ was about to leave His disciples and return to heaven, He left them - and us - with a challenge to be His witnesses not only at home but also to the very ends of the earth. A few days earlier, on a mountain in Galilee, he had left us the Great Commission: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20). His commission was explicit: we are to make disciples by leading people to Christ. We are then to mark these new disciples through baptism. And then we are to mature them by “teaching them to obey” all those things Christ commanded. It’s a basic requirement of the Christian faith that we are **all** to be God’s witnesses to a lost and dying world around us. The call to evangelism (to sharing the good news of Christ) is one of the most basic callings of the New Testament. Since the last words of those who leave us are always intriguing and important. Let’s dissect this particular challenge from the lips of our Lord and seek to apply it to our lives.

THE WHO OF EVANGELISM

“And **you** will be My witnesses.” This challenge is one Jesus gives to all of us. None of us is exempt from this basic element of Christian living; that is , to share the good news.

THE WHAT OF EVANGELISM

You shall receive what? Power! This is a great need of believers today. We all need power to live the Christian life. Perhaps the greatest difference between the first-century church and the twenty-first-century church is summarised in two words - *influence* and *power*. Today we pride ourselves on our influence. We seek to influence the decaying culture around us in various ways. But the early church did not even have enough influence to keep their leader Simon Peter out of prison. They were virtually void of influence with the civil and legal authorities. But the more important news is, they had enough power to pray him out of prison! We need this power to be His witnesses. The book of Acts is the story of a group of men and women just like you and me who-despite all the bigotry and bias of the Roman-ruled world- went out from a tiny upper room to tell the story of a publicly executed Jew. They did so much with so little. How? They had received power from on high.

THE WHEN OF EVANGELISM

When did this power come upon the group of believers? When the Holy Spirit came upon them. There is no such thing as a Christian without power. When you receive Christ, you have the Holy Spirit. He takes up residency in you. Thus, you have power. Many church members get all dressed up and are ready to go out and witness, but they never seem to get started. Why? We are all in need of a power outside of ourselves to energise us.

THE WHY OF EVANGELISM

The Holy Spirit enables us to be witnesses. This is the very reason why we have power - to be His witnesses. There should be no such thing as a Christian who is not a witness. If we are saved, we have Christ. If we have Christ, we have the Holy Spirit. If we have the Holy Spirit, we have power. And if we have power, we will be Jesus’ witnesses. The Lord did not call any of us to be a judge sitting in condemnation of others around us. He did not call us to be the prosecuting attorney, pointing our fingers of accusation at others. He did not call us to be the defence attorney, seeking to find loopholes so others could get past the law. He did not call us to be the jury, weighing all sorts of evidence for and against someone else. He called us to simply tell others what we have seen and heard from firsthand experience. That is, to be His witnesses. We are not recruiters trying to get people to join our club. We are not to be salesmen trying to persuade others to buy our product. We are simply to be Jesus’ witnesses. People marvel that God entrusted His holy gospel to such common men and women, without formal training. They were true witnesses.

(continued over page)

Skegness Community Church - Weekly Bible Study 2025

52 passages of Scripture that every believer should know

THE WHERE OF EVANGELISM

Jesus told us **all** to take His good news; here is total participation. And here is total penetration: we are to go "to the ends of the earth" The gospel will never find its final destination until it is shared with every person on the planet. In thirty short years, those early believers fulfilled Acts 1:8. How? They were empowered by the Holy Spirit and with singleness of purposed, witnessed His saving grace in Jerusalem (Acts 1-8), in Judea and Samaria (Acts 9-12), and to the end of their world (Acts 13-28). They did not pass hundreds of witnessing opportunities in their own city in order to go to the ends of the earth. They began at home in Jerusalem. Christ's gospel is to penetrate the whole world until every religion is confronted, every error exposed, and everyone receives a witness, It's a huge task. But think about those early believers. Their assignment seemed geographically impossible: most people still believed the world was flat. Their assignment appeared to be physically impossible. They had no air travel, radio, television, printing presses, Internet, or any of the modern means at their disposal for communicating the gospel. It seemed legally impossible:

They were forbidden by the government authorities to speak in Jesus' name. And it seemed socially impossible: after all, who would really listen to these scrubby Galileans, so void of culture and class? Yet, people did listen. They were witnessing through the power of the Holy Spirit. They did so much with so little, and we seem to do so little with so much. The time has come for the modern church to get back to basics, to follow the early believers' example, and fulfil Acts 1:8 in our lifetime as well.

As you memorise this verse, meditate on the awesome power that resides within each of us who has placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone. It would do us well to also memorise the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). Then get back to the basics of being Jesus' witnesses by making disciples, marking them by baptism, and teaching them to obey all He has commanded.