

THE DIVINE PLAN FOR MISSIONS

Scripture reading: Luke 24:36-53
Text: Acts 1:8

Intro: Where did our instructions for missions come from? From the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. All four Gospels touch on this, but Luke mentions it in his Gospel, and then begins with it in Acts.

Acts 1:8 gives the essential facts. Did you ever notice that Luke 24:46-49 is Acts 1:8 inverted?

Let us consider these four elements tonight:

I. The people involved: "ye".

Who were they?

^{From our Lord's point of view}
A. ~~Spiritually speaking~~, they were those who had trusted Christ, and they had become His disciples.

B. Humanly speaking, they could hardly have been needed. They were fearful, confused, doubting! Cf. 1 Cor. 1:26-29.

II. The power: "shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). Cf. Luke 24:49.

The Lord had spoken of the Spirit's ministry,

in Jn. 7:39; 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26, 27; 16:7-11.

We do not need to tarry for the reception of the Spirit (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20), but we need to know the Spirit's power.

The Spirit of God is the only One who can convict men of their need. There can be no real mission work without the Holy Spirit.

How can we know His power? Is it a spectacular manifestation? Not necessarily. The Spirit works through the Word. Cf. Eph. 5:18 with Col. 3:16.

This is the work of the Spirit in us - which must precede His work through us.

Note the use of the Word in Luke 24:44 ff. And note the place the Word is given in the preaching of the book of Acts.

This need has never changed.

III. The purpose: "and ye shall be witnesses unto me!"

Cf. Acts 8:35.

Cf. of the Lord Jesus, Luke 4:18a.

This again brings us to the Word. Cf. Acts 18:24-29. Also 1 Pet. 3:15

The great truths of salvation have to do with Christ - in prophecy, His Person (who He is), and His work, esp. His death and resurrection.

The more we know the Word, the better witnesses we will be.

Cf. Acts 1:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39-43.

There is power in a witness (preaching) that is full of the Word. Cf. of Stephen, Acts 6:10.

"Preach the Word" (2 Tim 4:2).
"Testify the Gospel" (Acts 20:24).

This is the only message of missions!

IV. The plan: "both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, + in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"Beginning at Jerusalem" (~~Acts~~ Luke 24:47).

Have you ever noticed the place given to Jerusalem in Luke - mentioned 32x? (Mk - 11x; Mt. - 12x; Jn - 13x) Cf. Luke 9:51; 13:22; 17:11; 13:31-35. What a witness to the grace of God that the beginning of world evangelism was to ~~begin~~ there!

Note: (1) the natural development
(2) the tie between home + foreign

This message is the only hope for the world. Present conditions give overwhelming evidence for the need of the Gospel!

Concl: Are we as missionary as we expect our missionaries to be?

They are not substitutes for us; they should be the result, the outgrowth of the very thing that is taking place here at home - as the Spirit of God uses the Word first in us, and then through us, that all men everywhere may hear of Christ.

THIS IS OUR MISSION!