

#2 The Continuation of the Book of Acts— Living in the Divine History within Human History

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I . The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history within human history as the acting God; they have become God in life, in nature, in expression, and in function (but not in the Godhead) for the spreading and building up of the church as the corporate manifestation of Christ:

A. In Peter's first proclamation of the gospel in the book of Acts, he quoted from the book of Joel, which reveals the intrinsic, divine history within the outward, human history.

Joel 2:28 And afterward I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; Your old men shall dream dreams; Your young men shall see visions.**32** And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah shall be saved; For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem will be an escape, As Jehovah has said, Even for the remnant Whom Jehovah calls.

B. The divine history within the human history is Christ's "goings forth...from the days of eternity" across the bridge of time into eternity future so that He might be dispensed into His chosen ones as the Desire of all the nations for His corporate manifestation and His full glorification.

C. Joel speaks concerning the outpouring of the processed, consummated, compound Spirit, who was poured out on the day of Pentecost; this Spirit is the consummated Triune God and the realization of Christ for the manifestation of Christ. [Mon]

II . The Acts of the Apostles is a book without an ending because this book is still being continued as the divine history within human history.

Acts 28:30 And he remained two whole years in his own rented dwelling and welcomed all those who came to him, **31** Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

A. The Lord said, "My Father is working until now, and I also am working" (John 5:17); this shows that since the rebellion of Satan and the fall of man, God has been working until now, and the Lord is also working.

B. The book of Acts is a record of the work of God; after Acts 28 many of God's vessels are still carrying on with His work; His work is continuing and has not stopped.

C. His work will go on until the kingdom and even until the new heaven and new earth; God is always advancing; He never stops; if we know this and believe in this, we will praise the Lord; even as the New

Jerusalem, His slaves will serve Him as priests.

[Tue]

D. The work of the Holy Spirit in preaching Christ for His propagation, multiplication, and spread through the believers of Christ was not yet completed and needed to be continued for a long period of time.

E. Such an evangelistic work for Christ's increase, propagation, multiplication, and spread is according to God's New Testament economy for the producing of many sons for God that they might be the members of Christ to constitute His Body for the carrying out of God's eternal plan and the fulfillment of His eternal will; this is revealed in detail in the twenty-one Epistles and the book of Revelation, which follow the book of Acts.

Rom. 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers; **12:5** So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

F. Since God is after a corporate, shining vessel, a vessel of testimony, His children must be brought to the awareness of the Body of Christ and learn to live the Body life; otherwise, they are useless in His hand and can never fulfill His goal.

G. Even the testimony of the overcomers is maintained on behalf of the whole church; they do the work, and the whole church receives the benefit.

H. The overcomers are not for themselves; they stand on the ground of the church, and they are there to bring the whole church to perfection; even the victories of the overcomers are corporate victories.

[Wed]

III . The word of God is still growing and being multiplied as the continuation of the book of Acts.

Acts 6:7 And the word of God grew, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly; and a large number of the priests obeyed the faith.

12:24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

A. Grew in Acts 6:7 refers to the growth in life, indicating that the word of God is a matter of life that grows as a seed sown into man's heart for the increase of Christ, the growth of God, within us.

B. Multiplied in Acts 12:24 refers to the increase of Christ in numbers; actually, the multiplication of the disciples depends on the growth of the word.

C. New disciples are "added to the Lord" to become the parts of Christ, the members of Christ.

Acts 5:14 And believers were all the more being added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,

D. We need to encourage the new believers "to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart"; this is to be persistently faithful to the Lord, cleave to Him, and live in close fellowship with Him.

IV. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history within human history by calling on the name of the Lord, suffering on behalf of the name of the Lord, and speaking in the name of the Lord, the name of Jesus:

A. Joel's prophecy and its fulfillment concerning God's New Testament jubilee have two aspects: on God's side, He poured out His Spirit in the ascension of the resurrected Christ; on our side, we call on the name of the ascended Lord, who has accomplished all, attained unto all, and obtained all:

① Our divine history in the midst of human history is a history of calling on the name of the Lord to enjoy the riches of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ as the fullness of Christ.

② By calling on the name of the Lord, we keep ourselves in God's golden, divine history—a history that begins with Enosh, continues through the Old and New Testaments, and concludes with the last prayer in the Bible. **[Thu]**

B. As we are living in the divine history, we suffer on behalf of the Lord's name within the human history; it is a real honor to be dishonored on behalf of the Name, the very name of the man-dishonored but God-honored Jesus.

Acts 5:41 So they went from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be dishonored on behalf of the Name.

C. We carry out the divine history within human history by speaking "boldly in the name of Jesus"; this name is the expression of the sum total of what the Lord is in His person and work

Acts 9:27 But Barnabas took hold of him and led him to the apostles, and he related to them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.

V. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history within human history by living, moving, and acting as one Body; they do everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body:

A. After the Lord Jesus died, resurrected, and ascended, He continued to live, act, walk, and work on earth in thousands of people because He imparted Himself into them through His death and resurrection.

B. The four Gospels give us a picture of the Head, and the book of Acts shows us the Body; the book of Acts is actually the acts of Christ by the Spirit in the church as His Body, His reproduction and duplication.

VI. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history within human history by rejecting themselves and living by another life—Christ as the divine life; this corporate living of Christ is the reality of the Body of Christ:

A. The life that is indicated by **this life** in **Acts 5:20** is the divine life preached, ministered, and lived by Peter that overcame the Jewish leaders' persecution, threatening, and imprisonment; Peter's life and work made the divine life so real and present in his situation that even the angel saw it and pointed it out.

B. Paul lived Christ and served God by the all-inclusive Spirit of Jesus in his spirit (the divine Spirit mingled with his human spirit as one spirit); he lived within the veil (in his spirit as the practical Holy of Holies) and outside the camp (the human organization of religion)

C. In order to live in the divine history within human history and by the divine life in our human life, we need to be vessels open to the Lord, loving Him, receiving Him, being filled with Him, and letting Him be everything to us and do everything in us, through us, and for us. **[Fri]**

VII. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history within human history by continuing steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word; this is to live in the apostolic ministry in coordination with Christ as our great High Priest in His heavenly ministry:

Heb. 8:1 ...We have such a High Priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, **2** A Minister of the holy places, even of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

A. By prayer we set our mind on the things above and become a reflection of Christ's ministry in the heavens; we depend on prayer to do what man cannot do, to understand what man cannot understand, and to speak what man cannot speak.

B. By the ministry of the word, we impart Christ into others as the heavenly life and power so that they may be sustained with the riches of Christ to live Christ as their heavenly life on earth.

Rom. 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.

VIII. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history within human history seen in Psalm 68, which shows that Christ is the center of God's move on the earth and the reality of God's activities through the church:

A. We need to enjoy the processed and consummated Triune God as the life dispensing and outpoured Spirit day by day.

B. We need to dwell in Christ as the "shore" of the evangelists for the transportation and spreading in the preaching of the gospel; on the day of Pentecost at least one hundred twenty gospel "ships," all of whom were Galileans, set out from the shore to spread the gospel. **[Sat]**

Experience ① : Boys, be ambitious in Christ & in God's economy!

Man always has a misconception that his age is the worst age of the church. At the time of Martin Luther some thought this way. At the time of John Wesley some thought this way. We consider Martin Luther's time a marvelous age and John Wesley's time a marvelous age also. While we consider their ages marvelous, some who come fifty years after us will say that we were at a marvelous age. We are afraid that man will stop. But God never stops....He is always advancing. Hallelujah! God is a God who keeps on advancing!

Every time God advances, He finds some vessels. In the book of Acts, God found some vessels. At the time of Martin Luther, God found a vessel, and at the time of John Wesley, He also found a vessel. Every time there is a spiritual revival, God finds some vessels. Where is God's vessel today? It is true that the Father is working until now. But who is continuing to work together with Him? Who can say, "I also am working"? This is the crucial question.

If God grants us light and if we see God's truth, we will admit that God is after the same vessel today that He ordained at the beginning. This vessel is the church. In other words, God is not after an individual vessel today, but a corporate one.

We have to learn to live the Body life....[For this] we have to deny the natural life and be judged and dealt with by God in a deep way. We must learn obedience, and we must also learn fellowship. In this way, we will have the chance of becoming God's vessel.

For Junior & Senior High School / College Students

The Lord has raised up Martin Luther during Reformation to bring out the human beings from the Dark Ages. In the church history, the Lord has used the missionaries like Charles Wesley to preach the gospel to the whole world and brought great revival in U.S.A. Wherever there is a spiritual revival, He finds out some vessels. God is always progressing. Where is the vessels of God today?. Who will keep working with God?

Dr. William Smith Clark of Hokkaido University was a pious Christian and told the young students, "Boys, be ambitious in Christ." Please have a superior goal while you are young. The church life which builds up the Body of Christ based on the vision of God's economy has the eternal value. And the practices of the 4 great constructions (prayer group, gospel farm, one on one shepherding, everyone functioning) are the detailed drawings for the building.

Actually, the study in school, the future jobs are all for the preparation for you to serve according to the drawing. May the young people like you would answer the Lord's call in the fellowship with the Lord while you are still young. May we renew our consecration and press on little by little according

to the 4 great constructions. May the Lord bless your future.! Amen!

Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus. I empty myself and open to You and consecrate myself to You. Lord, I love You. Please come and pick me up and possess me. God is seeking for the corporate vessel. May I grow up into the Head, Christ, for the building up of the Body of Christ to be the normal functioning member in the Body of Christ."

Experience ② : Calling on the name of the Lord and experience all the riches of God..

The name is the expression of the sum total of what the Lord Jesus is in His person and work. In the name of Jesus means in the sphere and element of all that the Lord is.

In the New Testament, calling on the name of the Lord was first mentioned by Peter...on the day of Pentecost, as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy [Joel 2:32](#). **And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah shall be saved;**

This fulfillment is related to God's outpouring of the all-inclusive Spirit economically upon His chosen people that they may participate in His New Testament jubilee. Joel's prophecy and its fulfillment concerning God's New Testament jubilee have two aspects: on God's side, He poured out His Spirit in the ascension of the resurrected Christ; on our side, we call on the name of the ascended Lord, who has accomplished all, attained unto all, and obtained all. Calling on the Lord's name is vitally necessary in order for us, the believers in Christ, to participate in and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ with all He has accomplished, attained, and obtained. It is a major practice in God's New Testament economy that enables us to enjoy the processed Triune God for our full salvation. The early believers practiced this everywhere

For new ones

Dear new ones, we who believe in Christ must call on the name of the Lord to participate in the all inclusive Christ and what he has fulfilled, attained and obtained and to enjoy Him. When we call on the name of the Lord, we can experience all the riches of God. How can we call on the name of the Lord practically?

1. **Cry out : Acts 2:21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."**

The Greek word for call on is composed of on and call(by name); thus, it is to call out audibly, even loudly, as Stephen did. We call on the name of the Lord by crying out with loud voice.

2. **Call like a deep breath : Lam. 3:55 I called upon Your name, O Jehovah, From the lowest pit. 56 You have heard my voice; do not hide Your ear at my breathing, at my cry.**

When you take a deep breath, you slowly breath out

carbon dioxide which you don't need and breath in the oxygen which you need. Calling on the name of the Lord is like a deep breath. You breath out quietly your troubles, sins, impatience, sorrow, tiredness and breath in the Lord's riches like life, peace, rest, joy and vitality.

3. Call with the spiritual partners, those who call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart :

II Tim. 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

You should call not only by yourself personally but also with your spiritual partners. Calling corporately energizes you more.

4. Prayer:"Oh Lord Jesus, I train myself to exercise spirit and call on the name of the Lord. I breath out the negative things like troubles and sins, and breath in the Lord's life, peace, rest, joy and vitality. And I join the small group meeting and Lord's day meeting every week, calling on the name of the Lord together with the brothers and sisters to enjoy the riches of Christ."

Experience ③ : Becoming Zebulun and Naphtali, speaking the beautiful words for preaching the gospel.

Zebulun typifies Christ as the "shore" of the evangelists for the transportation and spreading in the preaching of God's gospel. After Christ accomplished all the things that are to be proclaimed as the gospel, on the day of Pentecost at least 120 gospel "ships," all of whom were Galileans, set out from the "shore" to spread the gospel..

According to Genesis 49:21..., Naphtali is a hind let loose, and he gives beautiful words. Naphtali typifies Christ as the One who is released from death in resurrection, signified by the hind let loose, and gives beautiful words for the preaching of His gospel.

In typology Zebulun and Naphtali form a group for the spreading and the propagating of the glad tidings of Christ's redemption, accomplished for God's salvation. The people of both Zebulun and Naphtali were men of Galilee, from whom the gospel of Christ has been spread, preached, and propagated..

Paul went to Ephesus and made tents, yet he was still an apostle....Whether one made tents or practiced medicine, all were for the purpose of being an apostle, not that he might not be an apostle. Perhaps he could not be an apostle if he did not make tents. I hope we can see this point clearly before God. Many times, God allowed Paul to do some work to enable Paul to be an apostle all the more.

Whatever I do is for serving God. Not making money is to serve God, and making money is also to serve God.

We naturally have a mistaken thought, thinking that co-workers are those who have given up their occupation and have income other than that which comes from an occupation. This is not so. Co-workers are those who have

one heart, one purpose, and one ambition before God and who are serving God to please Him. As long as their purpose is the same, these are all co-workers in the Lord, no matter what jobs their hands are engaged in.

For Young working saints/graduate students

1. Lord's recovery is not human recovery. So we need to understand God's move and enter into the work of the Holy Spirit and cooperate with God's work in the flow of life. The Holy Spirit is working at the back of the environment for the benefit of the building of the church. You as the young working saints need to understand this move of God.
2. You need to work with leverage in your business. Likewise, serving the church should not be outside the work of the Holy Spirit but understand the movement of the Holy Spirit and keep up with the movement of the Holy Spirit. This point is extremely important. Otherwise, your service will be your own service, there will be no tail wind or leverage.
3. The government is actively accepting educated foreigners as one solution to the problem of population decline. Actually, this movement is due to the emergence of one new man. Foreigners entering society will weaken the Japanese culture and make it easy for preaching the gospel to the Japanese. Also, as saved foreigners come into church life, they help Japanese saints from Japanese culture. This will help you perform the church life in the senses of one new man.
4. Japan's economy has be weakened after the collapse of the bubble, Lehman Shock, and the Great East Japan Earthquake. Although it is gradually recovering, it is not as strong as the days before collapse of bubble economy. Besides, China's economy is getting stronger. Under these circumstances, the Japanese lose confidence and are being saved from their pride. As a result, it is getting easier for Japanese being saved.
5. Whether you are working or a full-time server, you are Lord's co-worker. Your job and family life will help you more as a co-worker of the Lord.
6. As a co-worker of the Lord, you should become Zebulun and Naphtali. Zebulun typifies Christ as the "shore" of the evangelists for the transportation and spreading in the preaching of God's gospel. Naphtali typifies Christ as the One who is released from death in resurrection, signified by the hind let loose, and gives beautiful words for the preaching of His gospel.
7. Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus. I will become Zebulun and Naphtali to give beautiful words and preach the release to free the people captured by Satan in resurrection, and by the great power of the resurrection."

To the lost world minister Christ,
Not just by word, but by life,
Imparting Christ by living deeds
To the poor souls living in strife.

C

To the lost world minister Christ,
By daily walk making Him known;
Imparting Christ by whom you live,
Share with all men what you own.

2

To the lost world minister Christ,
The precious One you possess,
Imparting Christ to those you love
As all their gain and success.

C

To the lost world minister Christ,
By daily walk making Him known;
Imparting Christ by whom you live,
Share with all men what you own.

3

To the lost world minister Christ,
The very Christ you enjoy,
Imparting Christ to all your friends
As all their boast and their joy.

C

To the lost world minister Christ,
By daily walk making Him known;
Imparting Christ by whom you live,
Share with all men what you own.

4

To the lost world minister Christ,
Who is your life and your all,
Imparting Christ to all you meet,
All fallen ones, great or small.

C

To the lost world minister Christ,
By daily walk making Him known;
Imparting Christ by whom you live,
Share with all men what you own.