

Spirit-Empowered Witnesses Acts 1:1-11

Albert Barnes:

This book contains incontrovertible evidence of the truth of Christianity. It is a record of the early triumphs of Christianity. Within the space of thirty years after the death of Christ, the gospel had been carried to all parts of the civilized, and to no small portion of the uncivilized, world. Its progress and its triumphs were not concealed. Its great transactions were not “done in a corner.” It had been preached in the most splendid, powerful, and corrupt cities; church were already founded in Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, and at Rome. The gospel had been spread in Arabia, Asia Minor, Greece, Macedon, Italy, and Africa. It had assailed the strongest existing institutions; it had made its way over the most formidable barriers; it had encountered the most deadly and malignant opposition; it had traveled to the capital [Rome] and had secured such a hold even in the imperial city as to make it certain that it would finally overturn the established religion and seat itself upon the ruins of paganism. Within thirty years, it had settled the point that it would overturn every bloody altar, close every pagan temple, bring under its influence the men of office, rank, and power, and that the banners of faith would soon stream from the palaces of the Caesars.

Outline

1. God Empowers His Witnesses in Jerusalem (1:1-8:3)
2. God Scatters His Witnesses to Judea and Samaria (8:4-12:25)
3. God Sends His Witnesses on Missionary Journeys (13:1-21:14)
4. God Delivers His Witness to Jerusalem and Rome (21:15-28:31)

#1: The Promise of the Spirit (1:1-5)

¹ In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

⁴ And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

#2: The Call to Witness (1:6-10)

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

A. The People Who Witness: Every Believer (1:8)

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Michael Green:

They were scattered from their base in Jerusalem and they went everywhere spreading the good news which had brought joy, release and a new life to themselves. This must often have been not formal preaching, but informal chattering to friends and chance

acquaintances, in homes and wine shops, on walks, and around market stalls. They went everywhere gossiping the gospel; they did it naturally, enthusiastically, and with the conviction of those who are not paid to say that sort of thing. Consequently, they were taken seriously, and the movement spread, notably among the lower classes.

B. The Path of a Witness: Suffering (1:8)

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

C. The Power of a Witness: The Holy Spirit (1:8)

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

D. The People in Need of a Witness: The Nations (1:8)

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

E. The Passion of a Witness: Jesus Christ (1:9-11)

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”