

reACT

catching up with the spirit

daily devotions for week 1

WHAT GOD HAS DONE



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WEEK 1 – WHAT GOD HAS DONE

MONDAY – What Jesus had been doing



Acts 1: 7-8 (NIV) *He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. 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.”*

In the era of Netflix, we eagerly await the next season of our favourite show. But it is easy to forget what happened in the last season. Some shows now include a “season recap” which you can watch to prepare you for the next season.

As we enter into this series on the book of Acts, we should remember it is not a new story, but rather a continuation from the Gospel according to Luke. In the previous “season” we encountered Jesus’ teaching and proclaiming the coming of the Kingdom of God. Now, following the gripping season finale where Jesus overcomes death, He is preparing to (kind of) leave the show. But He is promising

that the Holy Spirit is coming. The scene is set for another action-packed season!

Acts will continue the story with the promise that the work of establishing the Kingdom on earth will shift to Christ followers. The Spirit, which Jesus promises, will empower ordinary people with the ability to share and live out the good news!

- What has Jesus been doing in your life?
- What are you expecting from your next chapter?
- What is He expecting from your next chapter?



Prayer: Lord, as I go on this journey to explore the book of Acts, help me to listen to the prompting and guiding of Your Spirit. AMEN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIP1PusCcQY>

TUESDAY – What God is doing with all people



Acts 2: 17-18 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. Even on My servants, both men and women, I will pour out My Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

Diversity and inclusion may seem like a recent development for the human race. It feels like something we are just beginning to grapple with. But God has been at it since the beginning of time.

Today's scripture quotes the apostle Peter's first "sermon" given moments after the Holy Spirit descends on the disciples. The Jewish festival of Pentecost had brought a diverse group of people together in Jerusalem from across the ancient world. God enabled the disciples to share the good news of Jesus with people of many different languages, cultures, genders, social classes and ethnicities.

It was a foreshadow of what the church was meant to look like. As Matthew L. Skinner puts it in his book *Acts: Catching Up with the Spirit*: "*The church of Jesus Christ consists of a unity that gathers differences and distinctions into a common home.*"

To prophesy is to announce the reality of salvation as a gift from God. This is not a message only to be provided by ordained priests or ministers. No! Those who will prophesy will include people of all language, cultures, genders, social classes and ethnicities. The church God calls us to be a part of, is not one where everyone is the same. It is one where everyone is different!



Prayer: Thank You that You choose even me to carry Your good news. Help us as Your church to reflect You through our diversity.
AMEN

WEDNESDAY – What God does with the broken



Acts 3: 19-21a *So turn away from your sins. Turn to God. Then your sins will be wiped away. The time will come when the Lord will make everything new. He will send the Messiah. Jesus has been appointed as the Messiah for you. Heaven must receive Him until the time when God makes everything new.*

One of the challenges of my son's favourite Xbox racing game requires the player to search all over a British countryside to find hidden barns. In the barns are old rusted and broken classic cars. Upon finding the vehicle, the game then restores it to its former glory so that the player can drive it in the game. These are often some of the coolest cars in the game!

In today's scripture, Peter is once again preaching. This time his theme is universal restoration or making everything new. In one of the "greatest of all time" sermon illustrations, Peter had healed a beggar who couldn't walk. As he explains in verse 16: *"This man whom you see and know was made strong because of faith in Jesus' name. Faith in Jesus has healed him completely. You can see it with your own eyes."*

God wants to make you new. God wants to make the whole world new.



What does this mean for you? Perhaps you carry baggage, brokenness and scars from a life that never went the way you had hoped. The promise of Acts is that by turning to God He can bring healing and wholeness and purpose to your life. He can put you back together, piece by piece. And He can equip you to participate in His kingdom work of putting all of creation back together piece by piece.



Prayer: Lord, **melt** me, **mould** me, fill me, **use** me. AMEN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BagH-zTfnsQ>

THURSDAY – What God is always doing



Acts 13: 32-33, 38 *“We tell you the good news: What God promised our ancestors He has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: “You are my son; today I have become your father.” “Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.*”

In Acts 13, it is now Paul who has taken over preaching duties. This is the same Paul, also known as Saul, who just a few “episodes” ago was converted through a blinding light! Now, this new protagonist and former “know it all” Pharisee, is giving a history lesson to Jews and Gentiles in a local synagogue.

He explains how God’s track record in the Old Testament was evidence of His love for His people. For centuries, through His prophets, God tried to convince the Israelites to turn from their sin and live life in partnership with Him. Through John the Baptist, people were encouraged to turn away from their sin and be baptised. And then Jesus

demonstrates through His life, death and resurrection that our sin has no hold on us and we can enter into a better life with Him.

Paul had experienced God in a very tangible way. But he doesn’t point to that moment as much as he points to God’s activity throughout history. You can probably tell stories of how God has worked in your life even when you were not paying much attention to Him. God never stops working.

- What does that mean for you today?
- Does God feel distant?
- Are you not sure if you can trust Him?



Prayer: Thank You Lord that wherever I am, whatever I do, You are always present and working in my life. AMEN

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJCV_2H9xD0

FRIDAY – What God continues to do



Acts 17: 30-31 *In the past, God didn't judge people for what they didn't know. But now He commands all people everywhere to turn away from their sins. He has set a day when He will judge the world fairly. He has appointed a man to be its judge. God has proved this to everyone by raising that man from the dead.*

Today Paul is speaking to some very smart Greek philosophers. They supposedly “spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas!” (verse 21)

How can Paul prove to them that God is living and wants them to live lives that make a difference?

We can't simply believe because the Bible or a preacher tells us to. Matthew L. Skinner explains it this way:

“I don't think anyone can prove that Jesus was raised from the dead. That piece of Christian faith depends not on the tools of science, history, philosophy, or militaries but on the witness of the entire church. That testimony began in the

experience of people like Mary Magdalene, Peter, and Paul, and it is reaffirmed in our own encounters with the resurrected Christ through sacraments, personal experiences, serving others, and the word of God that we encounter in congregational life and out in the world”

Acts claims that God will continue to reveal to us the far-reaching consequences and implications of what He has done through Jesus Christ. God has acted in the world and continues to act. God has acted in your life and will continue to act. Now it is your turn to act.

As Saint Francis of Assisi said, “It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching.”



Prayer: Lord, I believe. Count me amongst those who made their life count in your Kingdom. AMEN

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_OTz-lpDjw