

HWMR: ONE ACCORD AND CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF THE BOOK OF ACTS
(Week 4)

Scripture Reading: Acts 1:8-11; 2:32-36; 3:13-15; 4:33; 5:30-32; 7:56; 20:28; 16:31

The Resurrected, Ascended, and All-inclusive Christ

- Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
- Acts 1:9 And when He had said these things, while they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him away from their sight.
- Acts 1:10 And while they were looking intently into heaven as He went, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them,
- Acts 1:11 Who also said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you beheld Him going into heaven.
- Acts 2:32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we all are witnesses.
- Acts 2:33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear.
- Acts 2:34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand
- Acts 2:35 Until I set Your enemies as a footstool for Your feet."
- Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.
- Acts 3:13 The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him.
- Acts 3:14 But you denied the holy and righteous One and asked that a man who was a murderer be granted to you;
- Acts 3:15 And the Author of life you killed, whom God has raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.
- Acts 4:33 And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.
- Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers has raised Jesus, whom you slew by hanging Him on a tree.
- Acts 5:31 This One God has exalted to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
- Acts 5:32 And we are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.
- Acts 7:56 And he said, Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.
- Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.
- Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.

Day 1

Acts 1:3 - To whom also He presented Himself alive after His suffering by many irrefutable proofs, appearing to them through a period of forty days and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Acts 2:24 - Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

I. The Christ revealed in Acts is in **resurrection**—1:3; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33:

- A. Through death Christ entered into another realm, the **realm of resurrection**:
 - 1. Because Christ is the **living One** with an **indestructible life**, death is not able to hold Him—Heb. 7:16; Acts 2:24.
 - 2. He delivered Himself to death, but death had no way to retain Him; rather, **death was defeated by Him**, and **He rose up from it**.
- B. We need to know Christ in the **power, sphere, and element of His resurrection**—Phil. 3:10-11.
- C. **Christ's resurrection** was the focus of the apostles' testimony—Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:13, 15, 26; 4:33; 10:39-40; 13:33; 17:3, 18:
 - 1. **God glorified** His Servant Jesus through His resurrection and in His ascension—Luke 24:26; Acts 3:13, 15, 26; 4:10, 33; 5:30-31.
 - 2. The **resurrection of the Lord** Jesus **points back** to His incarnation, humanity, human living, and God-ordained death and **points forward** to His ascension, ministry and administration in heaven, and coming back—2:23; 1:9-11.

As we have pointed out, 1:3-26 is concerned with **preparation**, a preparation both on the **Lord's side** and the **side of the disciples**. In this section of Acts we see Christ's preparation of the disciples in His resurrection. He speaks to them things concerning the kingdom of God and charges them to wait for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. After Christ's ascension in verses 9 through 11, we have the disciples' preparation. The disciples persevered in prayer and then chose Matthias.

Before the Lord went to the heavens to carry out His propagation in His ascension, He did something further to prepare His disciples. Although they had been with Him for three and a half years, they still had **not yet been fully prepared**. From this we see that **we can not do a quick work to perfect the saints** in the Lord's recovery.

We may say that the three and a half years the Lord Jesus spent with His disciples were nearly the equivalent of a college education, which usually lasts four years. Perhaps you are wondering about the last half year of the "college course" for the Lord's disciples. This last half year took place after His resurrection.

Throughout the centuries, people have learned that in order for a person to be educated properly, he needs to pass through kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, high school, and four years of college. All the years from kindergarten through high school are a preparation for the college years. We may apply this principle to the Bible and find in the Scriptures various levels of spiritual education. In the Old Testament we go from “kindergarten” in Genesis to “high school” in the Psalms and the Prophets. In between, we have the “elementary school” beginning in Exodus, and “junior high” in the historical books. Coming to the New Testament, we may say that the Gospels are on a “college” level and that the Epistles are on the level of “graduate school.”

The Lord Jesus spent three and a half years with the disciples to give them a “college education.” Although Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen, the Lord’s calling uplifted them and made them “college students.” Gamaliel, however, remained in the Old Testament “high school.” As both “professor” and “chancellor,” the Lord Jesus first spent three and a half years with His “students.” The remainder of their “education” was completed in His resurrection. This means that the Lord was able to carry out three and a half years of education with His disciples when He was in the flesh. Then in His resurrection He completed their training. (*Life Study of Acts, Message 4*)

Day 2

Acts 2:32-34 - This Jesus God has raised up, of which we all are witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, “The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand

II. The Christ revealed in Acts is in **ascension**—1:9-11; 2:32-36; 5:31:

- A. Whereas **resurrection** is a matter of **life**, Christ’s **ascension** is a matter of **position**, and position is a matter of **authority**.
- B. The Lord’s ascension was His **initiation** into His **living and ministry in the heavens**; this initiation brought Him into a new realm, that is, into the heavens where He now has His living and is ministering there.
- C. The Lord’s ascension brought Him into a new stage—the **stage of a resurrected man living in the heavens** as the center of God’s administration—Rev. 5:6:
 1. This resurrected One is now sitting in the heavens to **execute God’s administration**—Heb. 12:2.
 2. The resurrected Christ ascended to the heavens to be exalted by God and to be given the **kingship**, the **lordship**, and the **headship** over all things—Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:22.
- D. The ascended Christ has also obtained the **throne**, the **glory**, and **all the authority** in the universe—Rev. 5:6; Heb. 1:3; 2:9; Matt. 28:18.
- E. The ascended Christ is the **Lord of all to possess all**—Acts 2:36:
 1. The **lordship of Christ** is one of the most important aspects of what He has obtained in His ascension—10:36.
 2. Since the lordship of Christ was fully established in His ascension, we—the members of His Body—need to realize this heavenly fact—Eph. 1:20-21.
- F. The ascended Christ is **God’s Anointed to carry out God’s commission** to work out the spreading of the gospel and the building up of the church—Acts 1:8.

In 2:38 Peter tells the people to **repent**, be **baptized** for the forgiveness of sins, and they will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit is not any gift distributed by the Spirit, as mentioned in Romans 12:6, 1 Corinthians 12:4, and 1 Peter 4:10; rather, it is the **gift which is the Holy Spirit Himself**, given by God to the believers in Christ as the unique gift that produces all the gifts mentioned in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and 1 Peter 4.

The Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 is the all-inclusive Spirit of the processed Triune God in His New Testament economy, **both essential for life and economical for power**, given to the believers at the time of their believing in Christ as the all-inclusive blessing of God's full gospel, so that they may enjoy all the riches of the Triune God.

The apostles preached and ministered Christ. But when their hearers **repented** and **believed** in Him, they **received the wonderful Spirit of the Triune God**. This implies that this Spirit is just the resurrected and ascended Christ Himself. The receiving of the Spirit here is both essential and economical, in a general and all-inclusive sense, differing from the receiving of the Spirit in Acts 8:15-17 and 19:2-6, which is particularly the receiving of the Spirit falling upon the believers economically.

In 2:39 Peter went on to say, *“For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all those who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself.”* In this verse “you” refers to the Jews, and the “promise” denotes the **Holy Spirit**. Those who are far off are the Gentiles, included in “all flesh” (v. 17). Those whom the Lord our God calls to Himself are the ones chosen and predestinated by God in eternity and called by Him in the New Testament age. (*Life Study of Acts, Message 11*)

Day 3

Acts 2:23 - This man, delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, through the hand of lawless men, nailed to a cross and killed;

Acts 3:15 - And the Author of life you killed, whom God has raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.

III. The Christ revealed in Acts is the **all-inclusive Christ**—3:14-15, 25-26; 5:30-32; 7:56; 10:36, 39-43; 16:31; 17:30-31; 20:28:

A. Christ is the **Author of life**—3:14-15:

1. As indicated by the Greek word rendered “Author,” Christ is the **origin** or **Originator of life**; He is the Author, the Chief Leader, in life—v. 15.
2. In Acts 3 we see the **impacting of life** into others, which is to **propagate Christ**; for such a propagation, we need the Lord as the Author of life, the source of life.
3. As the Author of life, Christ is the **holy and righteous One**—v. 14.

B. Christ is **God's Servant**—vv. 25-26:

1. As the seed of Abraham and the Servant of God, Christ is the One in whom all the families of the earth—all the races, colors, and nationalities—will be blessed—vv. 25-26.
2. God sent back the ascended Christ as a blessing by **pouring out the Spirit** on the day of Pentecost; hence, the Spirit whom God poured out was the Christ whom God raised and exalted to the heavens—2:33; 3:13-15, 25-26.

Peter and John did a miracle, and the people paid their attention to it. But in his speaking Peter turned the attention of the people from the miracle to a Person, to the Lord Jesus. Although Peter and John had performed a miracle, Peter did not talk about the miracle. Instead, he used the miracle as a basis to **turn his audience to Christ**. He turned the people's attention from the healing to the Healer.

Peter's message was based on the miracle of the healing of the lame man. However, it was not Peter's burden to talk about divine healing. Rather, his burden was to **propagate Christ**. He was burdened to **speak forth Christ**, to **speak out Christ**.

Peter's burden was to speak Christ directly into others so they may become **Christ's propagation** to be **His living members** in order that Christ may have a Body on earth. Pentecost is for the propagation of Christ, not for miracles, wonders, signs, and divine healing. All those things are minor. Even though a lame man was healed through Peter and John, Peter's emphasis was not on healing but on the name of the Lord Jesus. First, Peter said to the lame man, "In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!" Then in his message he went on to say, "By faith in His name, His name has made this man strong, whom you behold and know" (v. 16). Therefore, Peter did not preach divine healing or miracles; **he preached the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ**.

Although Peter turned the attention of the people from the healing to the Healer, today Christians who emphasize healing often direct people's attention from the Healer to healing, even a false healing. Many of the so-called healings in Pentecostal meetings are not genuine. After the lame man was healed, "he stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God" (v. 8). This was a genuine healing. Nevertheless, Peter directed the people **to the Healer, to the Lord Jesus**. We also should turn our attention away from healing to the Healer.
(Life Study of Acts, Message 13)

Day 4

Acts 5:31 - This One God has exalted to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

John 17:2 - Even as You have given Him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him.

C. Christ is the **Leader** and **Savior**—5:30-32:

1. God exalted the man Jesus as the **highest Leader**, the **Prince**, the **Ruler of the kings** to rule over the world, and the Savior to save God's chosen people— Rev. 1:5; 19:16; Acts 5:31.
2. **Leader** is related to His **authority**, and **Savior** is related to His **salvation**; He rules sovereignly over the earth with His authority so that the environment might be fit for God's chosen people to receive His salvation—cf. 17:26-27.

Day 5

Acts 7:56 - And he said, Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.

Acts 20:28 - Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

D. Christ is the **Son of Man**—7:56:

1. **Acts 7:56** reveals that Christ is the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God to be the **comfort, encouragement, and strength** to the one martyred for Him.
2. Stephen saw the ascended Christ as the Son of Man; this indicates that the Christ who is in the heavens **still has His humanity**; He still possesses His human nature.

E. Christ is **God**—20:28:

1. Christ as our God is the **Purchaser of the church**, having obtained the church with His own blood—v. 28.
2. God **secured, purchased, and redeemed** the church with “His own blood” (v. 28), “the blood of Jesus His Son” (1 John 1:7).
3. Christ died on the cross as the God-man, and the blood that He shed there for our redemption was not only the blood of the man Jesus but also the **blood of the God-man**.
4. The blood through which God obtained the church is **God’s own blood**.

The chaotic situations with the earthly governments in the world today are setting the stage for our Lord’s return. In the midst of this, we should **not only pray** that the Lord will be merciful to us and that we will be **kept faithful**. We also need to **know our position**. We are serving not merely a **resurrected Savior** but the **ascended One**, and He is now in ascension with His Body. The One in ascension is not an individual man but a **corporate God-man**. He is the Head, and we are His Body, administrating over all the affairs of the earth today. We are not part of any human government, but **we have been seated with Christ in the heavenlies**. May the Lord open our eyes to see the position that God placed us in as the church. We are not merely on the earth to meet as the church and to preach the gospel to gain increase. While we are doing these things, which are needed, we must not forget our heavenly position. The ascended Christ has been transferred to a heavenly realm, and in that heavenly realm He has been made Lord and Christ. He is the heavenly Minister, the Mediator of God’s new covenant, the heavenly High Priest, and the Minister of the tabernacle, ministering to us the heavenly life and power for us to live a heavenly life on earth.

Today we have not only a **resurrected life** but also a **heavenly life**. **Everything that we do**, including our **service in the churches**, needs to be **heavenly**. It is for this reason that we must never allow the use of gimmicks or engage in any earthly politics in the church. **We are a heavenly people, and we are under Christ’s heavenly ministry**. He is ministering to us and carrying out God’s administration in the heavenly realm. In this realm Christ has many statuses. He is the Lord of lords and King of kings, the Ruler of the kings of the earth, the Head over all things to the church, and the heavenly High Priest, who is praying and interceding for us. (*The Ministry of the Word, vol. 29, No. 5, chapter 4*)

Day 6

Acts 10:34-35 - And opening his mouth, Peter said, In truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons, But in every nation he who fears Him and works righteousness is acceptable to Him.

Acts 17:31 - Because He has set a day in which He is to judge the world in righteousness by the man whom He has designated, having furnished proof to all by raising Him from the dead.

F. Christ is the **Lord of all**—Acts 10:36:

1. *All* in Acts 10:36 refers to **all peoples**—1 Tim. 2:4.
2. The ascended Christ is the Lord of **all the different races and peoples on earth**; with Him, there is no respect of persons—Rev. 5:9.

G. Christ is the **Judge**—Acts 10:39-43:

1. Christ has been designated by God to be the **Judge of the living and the dead**—v. 42.
2. **Christ** is a **man to judge the world**, designated by God in righteousness and proved by God's raising Him from the dead—17:30-31.

H. Christ is the **Lord Jesus**, the **object of the believers' faith**—16:31:

1. To believe in the **gospel** is mainly to believe in **Jesus Christ**—v. 31.
2. To **believe** in the Lord Jesus is to **stand** on the person of Christ and all that He has accomplished, both of which constitute the belief, the faith, of God's New Testament economy—1 Tim. 1:4.