

CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH
Making Christ Known

August 28, 2006

Vol. 7 Number 35

The Red Thread
Connecting Sunday Scriptures to Daily Life

PROMISED POWER

Our Wednesday Bible study of Acts offers the opportunity for memorization of a Bible memory verse each week. For this week our memory verse was Acts 1:8 ~ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Scripture holds great meaning in the little words. The first word, “but” only makes sense if we know what was said before it. “But” is a word that introduces something that is true in spite of to what has just been said. This verse is part of a conversation between Jesus and his disciples at his Ascension. Jesus is finally leaving them – for good this time. In fear of being left, the disciples want to know what is going to happen next. Is this the promised time when the kingdom is restored to Israel? That was their hope and their agenda for what should happen next. Jesus tells them that they don’t get to know because timing is the Father’s business. And now here comes the “but.” You don’t get to know, BUT you will receive God’s power so you can have peace in the “not knowing.” To receive this power means there is an active giver and receiver. God initiates the transaction as the giver of a gift. God’s power is not forced on anyone. He graciously offers. We choose to receive. Not only is God the giver, he also enables our receiving through the Holy Spirit, which will “come upon you.” So this is God’s gig all the way! He sends the Holy Spirit to deliver his power and enable us to receive it. This power has a special limited purpose: “you will be my witnesses.” God gives us evangelizing power, to tell his story in Greenville, in the United States, and all over the world! God sends us out every day to be a witness to his saving grace to a world that needs it. In our study of Acts of the Apostles (not thoughts of or writings of, but actions of) we learn how to use God’s power for his purpose – to tell the story to those we encounter each day in a way that they can hear it, accept it, and believe in it.

Joshua 24:1-2,14-18 acknowledges our choice of gods or God. “Choose this day whom you will serve” (verse 15). No other god offers the power promised in Acts 1:8. By remembering God’s prior saving acts on behalf of his people, the choice becomes clear.

Psalms 34:15-22 makes clear that God’s presence is in his promised power. God does not deny it – there will be many troubles. God’s power does not take those away. BUT God is with us in the midst of trouble to hear us, to stand with us, to deliver us, to protect us, and to save us.

Ephesians 6:1-20 imagines God’s power as armor that we put on each day: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, shoes for evangelism, shield of faith, and the helmet of

salvation. The secret weapon, which is our battle plan, is prayer. God makes us ready to be his witnesses to a resisting world.

John 6:56-59 reminds us one more time that Jesus is our nourishment as we carry out God's plan in the world. Jesus is bread for life that comes straight from heaven. With divine power, protection, and nourishment we are sent out knowing that it is only our Lord Jesus Christ who has the words of eternal life. Where else can we go to receive all that we need?

Pastor Marilyn