

Dr. Ron Armstrong • June 6, 2021

### The Movement Begins: The Church Makes “Us”

**Acts 1:1** In my former book, *Theophilus*, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach [2] until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. [3] After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. [4] On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. [5] For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

[6] So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

[7] He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. [8] 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."

[9] After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

[12] Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. [13] When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew ... [14] They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

[15] **In those days Peter stood up among the believers**, a group numbering about a hundred and twenty, [16] and said, "Brothers and sisters, ...

#### A. The Book of Acts is the beginning of “Us.”

1. Luke is our writer, and he has two things on his mind: the birth of the Church and the explosive spread of The Way.
2. The Day of Pentecost is around 10 days away. It's the key day in the Book of Acts. The Holy Spirit will give the disciples great courage; Peter will preach; the Church will be launched.
3. One person at a time, the Church will make the journey to Rome, and from there, to the world.
4. The Church will lead to the global interconnectedness of believers. It's what makes “us” “Us.”
5. How we got here all starts here. Let's talk about your history. (It helps to draw it.)

#### B. In this story, who are we? We're all Peter.

1. We're Peter because he was deeply flawed, and everybody knew his failures.
2. He was impetuous, violent, loud-mouthed, prideful, cowardly, judgmental, and wonderfully used by God.
3. The local church is always led and inhabited by flawed, imperfect people. The miracle is what God is able to do with us.
4. The key to recovering from failure is to understand the difference between, “It TAKES time” and “It IS time.”
  - a. It takes time to emotionally process hurts and failures. How long it will take is complicated.
  - b. But you reach a point when it is time to quit procrastinating, focusing on your failure, and stand up.
5. When did God use Peter? When he stood up among them. We need you to stand among us.