

HOW TO LIVE OUT THE GOSPEL RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE

Acts 1:8

Bratislava, 2nd October 2016

Acts 1:8 ἀλλὰ λήμψεσθε δύναμιν ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐφ' ὑμᾶς καὶ ἔσεσθέ μου μάρτυρες ἐν τε Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ [ἐν] πάσῃ τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ Σαμαρείᾳ καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς.

Acts 1:8 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.

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4. TO REMEMBER**0. INTRODUCTION**

- Maybe we would like to begin with the idea of “living the gospel” – but I think, doing that we may overlook several important questions: Are we in the place *God* wants us to be? Do we *really* know the place where we dwell? What is the greatness of the Gospel? [beyond my personal appropriation] What is *life* from God’s point of view?

0.1. THE THREE ANGLES TAKEN HERE

- (1) What is my place? (2) What is the Gospel? (3) What it means “to live the Gospel”?
- (1) Is it *your* place – from God? (2) Do I know the Gospel – in its proper *proportions*? ...in its *today*’s application? (3) “To live” – justice/righteousness → acceptance with God → philosophy of life

0.2. THE TEXT (ACTS 1:8)

- to live Christian life = to live in the Holy Spirit (**Rom 8:14** For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.)

1. MY PLACE

- “diagnosis”; self-knowledge;
 - (1) Before the gospel (“BC”)
 - **Gn 3:9** But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" (תַּיִן)
 - **Gn 3:10** "I heard the sound of (1) *you* in the garden, and I was (2) *afraid*, because I was (3) *naked*, and I (4) *hid* myself." → (1) Fear & (2) Self-consciousness & (3) Escape →
 - (2) After the gospel (“AD”)
 - **Rev 2:13** "I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is.

1.1. PLACES WE INDWELL

- Geography; Time [history, personal]; Culture; Beliefs; → IMAGINATION
 - Culture of the *SELF*: Marcus Brigstocke “Why I am not a Christian” [*Christianity, Mar 2012*]
- History; Meta-narrative/Master narrative (“progress”)
- *Zeitgeist*: (1) anthropocentrism/society, (2) individualism/the self, (3) scientism/methods, (4) secularized eschatology/survival
- Popular Culture (TV, advertising, music, films, internet...)

1.2. THE SPIRITUAL IMAGINATION

- **John 4:24** God is **spirit**, and those who worship him must worship **in spirit and truth**.
- the *unreal* world of my mind [unseen realities; interpretations; expectations...]
- Faith: *Visualization destroys imagination!* [POSTMAN *Amusing Ourselves to Death*]
- **1Cor 2:9-10** ...“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, **nor the heart of man imagined** (ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη), what God has prepared for those who love him”- ¹⁰ these things God has revealed to us [ἀπεκάλυψεν] through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.
- worship in spirit and *truth* → the Holy Spirit gives you *REALITY* as it is from God’s point of view: self-knowledge, time-knowledge, guidance into the future...

2. MY HERO

- **John 16:13-14** When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ **He will glorify me,** for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

2.1. “EUANGELION”

- The gospel as **the Master Narrative**: the victory of God in the Ultimate Conflict → history, the Universe...
- the *CROSS* as *VICTORY*,
- the future as the Living Hope: **1Pt 1:3** ...be born again to a **living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead

2.2. JESUS – THE ULTIMATE HERO

- **When your heart is are full of the Holy Spirit, your mind is full of Jesus!**
- Know, Admire (2Thes 1:10 ‘to be marveled at’ θαυμάσθηναί), Think!; Imagine!
- [Herbert BUTTERFIELD] Hold to Christ, and for the rest be totally uncommitted.¹

3. MY LIFE

(1) Life → a birth into existence

- **Jn 3:5** "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is **born** of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.
- **Mt 3:11** He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
- [Stanley Jones *The Way*] Intention, Invasion, Indwelling

(2) Life → a journey through time

- life *crossroads* → making decisions

3.1. “SPIRIT” AND LIFE

- **John 3:7** ... **You must be born again** → new *beginning*; new *existence*.
- breathing → “burning” oxygen
- breathing; meaningful; enthusiastic; passion; “spirited” → alive; animated; ardent;
- decision making → making steps forward/backward(?)

3.2. WALK IN THE SPIRIT → GUIDANCE

- **Gal 5:25** If we **live** by the Spirit, let us also **walk** by the Spirit.

¹ BUTTERFIELD, H. *Christianity and History*, New York : Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1950, p. 146.

- **Rom 8:14** For all who are **led by the Spirit** of God (πνεύματι θεοῦ ἄγονται) are sons of God
- **Gal 5:18** But if you are **led by the Spirit** (εἰ δὲ πνεύματι ἄγεσθε), you are not under the law

- Two sources of guidance: (1) the Scriptures, (2) the Spirit/the power of God [the Sadducees' error]

[GOULBURN] Now the same God who has sent us His Word equally sends us the daily occurrences of life, the chief difference being that, whereas the Word has a general voice for all, in which each is to find his own case represented, the occurrences are charged with a more specific message to individuals.²

- **Psalm 18:28** For it is **you who light my lamp**; the LORD my God lightens my darkness.
- → interpret the Scriptures & interpret your providences (God's word through daily events)
- Should I *know* all the answers??? → (**John 14:26** ...the Helper [ESV], the Holy Spirit... ὁ δὲ παράκλητος, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ὃ πέμψει ὁ πατήρ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου)
 - The Holy Spirit (1) gives assurance of your *adoption* [Rom 8:16] (2) guides you to the right understanding of *truth* [John 16:13], (3) creates *hope* by revealing the future [John 16:13; 1Cor 2:9–10], (4) gives you ability to defend oneself when you are *persecuted* [Lk 12:12]...

4. TO REMEMBER

- To “live the gospel **in our place**” we must be in the place approved by God, and to know that place to the best of our abilities. → let the Spirit *undeceive* you.
- To “live the **gospel**” we need to the very *core* of the gospel (the Cross of Christ) and the ways this gospel should confront the current *Zeitgeist*. → admire Jesus Christ.
- To “**live** the gospel” we have to understand, there is no divine life without the Divine Spirit and his guidance. → listen to the Spirit.

² GOULBURN, E. M. *Thought of Personal Religion*, New York : D. Appleton & Co., 1877, p. 225.