

**“All That Jesus Continued to Do and Teach”**

**Acts 1:1-5**

**September 3, 2023**

**Faith Presbyterian Church – Evening Service**

*Pastor Nicoletti*

**The Reading of the Word**

Tonight we begin a new evening sermon series in the Book of Acts.

As I explained last Lord’s Day morning, this will be a shared series between our three pastors. I’ll preach tonight on the first five verses of Acts chapter one, Pastor Guterrez will preach on verses six through eleven next Sunday evening, Pastor Knox will pick up in verse twelve the Sunday after that, and so on. We will still have guest preachers from time to time, who will preach from other texts, along with special services at different times of the year, and we may break from the series for the summer, but the foundation of our evening services from September up to June will be this shared series in the Book of Acts.

And tonight, as we come to the <sup>Basic's</sup> opening lines, some background may be helpful for us.

The Book of Acts is written by Luke – the same Luke who wrote the Gospel the bears his name. And the introduction of the Book of Acts makes it clear that those two books were meant to be taken together.

We don't have a detailed biography of Luke. We know that Luke was "an educated doctor, a traveling companion of [the Apostle] Paul, and [that he] lived in Palestine for at least two years." [Stott, 3]

Though medicine was very different two thousand years ago, doctors still underwent "rigorous training" and Luke's Greek style is "that of a cultured person."

Luke brought to his task not only an intelligent and well-trained mind, but a good deal of access to his subject matter. First, he traveled with Paul. Later in the Book of Acts, we will see the third person plural pronouns, "they," change at times to first person plural pronouns, "we," indicating that Luke, at those times, was traveling along with Paul.

And as part of his travels, we learn that Luke spent time in Palestine. He arrived in Jerusalem with Paul, in Acts 21:7, and he leaves with Paul in Acts 27:1. Between those two points in the book, was a span of time of over two years<sup>10-12</sup> where Paul was held as a prisoner in Caesarea, but Luke was free. While we can't know for sure, it's reasonable to assume that in this time Luke gathered material for his Gospel and for the portions of Acts that took place in Jerusalem, familiarizing himself not only with the region and its culture, but also speaking to eye-witnesses to the events, as he indicates that he did at the beginning of his Gospel. [Stott, 3-4]

Luke was not Jewish – he was a Gentile. He’s actually the only Gentile contributor to the New Testament, and he wrote with a Gentile audience and framework in mind. [Stott, 11]

And his contribution was significant. Going by word count in the original language, Luke wrote more of the New Testament than any other human author. While Paul wrote more individual books, Luke wrote the two longest books in the New Testament, which together make up over 27% of the New Testament.

So Luke gives us these two, lengthy books, and they are meant to be considered together. And their introductions help set the stage for how we understand them.

Luke begins the first book – his Gospel – with these words. He writes:

<sup>1:1</sup> Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us,<sup>2</sup> just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us,<sup>3</sup> it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,<sup>4</sup> that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

So the Gospel of Luke begins. And it goes on to tell of the birth, life, death, resurrection, and then ascension of Jesus Christ. It ends there. And that is where Luke's second work, the Book of Acts, picks up.

With all that in mind, let's hear now from our text this evening: Acts 1:1-5.

Please do listen carefully, for this is God's word for us this evening:

<sup>1:1</sup> In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, <sup>2</sup>until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

<sup>4</sup>And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; <sup>5</sup>for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

This is the word of the Lord. (Thanks be to God.)

## Introduction

So Luke begins this second book – this historical sequel – just a bit before his first book ended. He begins by placing us at some point after Jesus’s resurrection, but before Jesus’s ascension to heaven, in that forty-day period between those two events.

So that is the historical point where the Book of Acts begins, and where it links chronologically to Luke’s Gospel.

But that is not actually the most startling link that Luke *make* places here. The most startling link comes in verse one. There Luke writes: “In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up.”

His Gospel, Luke tells us, recorded all that Jesus began to do and teach. “Began.” That’s a shocking statement. Luke is saying that the earthly ministry of Jesus is not the entirety of his ministry. In fact, Luke goes so far as to say that Jesus’s earthly ministry is only the beginning of Jesus’s work and his teaching in the world.

And lest we misunderstand, he gives us a point in history for clarity: the ascension. That’s what he points to in verse two: “In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up.”

In other words, Jesus's ministry, up until his ascension into heaven, was only the beginning of his work and ministry.

We might take <sup>rewritten</sup> Luke's words, here, which are about his Gospel, and state their implication for the Book of Acts. If we did that, the introduction would read something like this: "In this second book, O Theophilus, I will deal with all that Jesus continued to do and teach, after the day when he was taken up."

That's the implication of Luke's words here – if the Gospel is the beginning of Jesus's work and teaching, then in the Book of Acts we're getting the continuation of Jesus's work and teaching.

The contrast between the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts, John Stott points out, is not that one is about Jesus and the other is about the Church. Rather, in Luke's mind, the two books describe two stages of ministry carried out by Jesus Christ on earth – one where he was physically on earth, and the next which he accomplished on earth but from heaven. [Stott, 12]

This leads to an obvious question, though. If Jesus is in heaven now – if he has bodily ascended to heaven – then how can he continue to work and to teach on earth?

Luke will answer that question in more detail in the chapters ahead. But already, in these opening words, he gives us the foundation of the answer. He tells us here that Jesus continues to work and to teach in this world through his Word, through his Spirit, and through his Church.

Jesus continues to work and teach in this world through his Word, through his Spirit, and through his Church.

Those three elements are laid out in verse two. There Luke writes that Jesus “had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles.” He gave his word, through his Spirit, to his Church. He did that before his ascension. But as Luke has just told us, that ~~that~~ was only the beginning of his ministry. And in what follows we will see Jesus continue to work through his Word, his Spirit, and his Church.

Now ... even as we say that, an important distinction will need to be made. There are both strong similarities, and important differences in how Jesus worked and taught during the ministry of the Apostles, and how he works and teaches today. In all three areas Luke highlights here, there are strong similarities between how he worked then, and how he works now. But there are also important differences we need to note.

An analogy might be helpful. In Ephesians 2, Paul describes the Church as a house – as the house of God. And he says that that house is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.” [2:20] Jesus, we are told in that same verse, serves as the cornerstone of the Church. But, in Matthew 16 Jesus also tells us that he is the builder of the Church [16:18], and the author of Hebrews affirms that role of Jesus as well – he is the chief builder of God’s household, the Church [Hebrews 3:3].

Now, these are different texts speaking to different needs, and we don’t want to be overly rigid in how we relate them to one another, but I still think there is a helpful picture for us here to understand our topic this evening.

For one thing, perhaps we have a helpful distinction between what Jesus began to do and teach and what he continued to do and teach. In his work in his earthly ministry, Jesus was the cornerstone of the Church, the anchor and grounding on which everything else would depend. And now, along with that, in what Jesus continues to do and teach, he serves as the chief builder of the Church.

But as Jesus builds his church – as he continues to work and to teach – there are different stages to that work. The ministry of the Apostles was a foundational period: the foundation was laid upon which the later Church, for

centuries to come would depend. Then, after that, comes the building of the Church upon that foundation. *Apostolic period*

Now, between the foundation and what goes on top of it, there are both strong similarities and important differences. For one thing, they are both parts of the same building, and so they are fundamentally united and at one with each other. For another, they have the same chief builder: it is Jesus who worked in laying the foundation and it is Jesus who is at work now to build upon that foundation. Though this may stretch the metaphor a bit and depart from actual construction practices (I wouldn't really know): one thing we learn in the Book of Acts is that in laying the foundation, and in then building upon it, Jesus uses the same tools, even.

But he uses those tools differently. The work is not identical. There are important differences.

And so tonight, we want to consider both how Jesus continued to work and teach in the time of the Apostles, as well as how he continues to work and teach today.

And in both cases, Luke tells us here that Jesus continues to work and to teach in this world through his Word, through his Spirit, and through his Church.

## His Word

First, Jesus continues to work and to teach through his Word.

We see this in verses two and three.

First, in verse two, Luke highlights that Jesus gave commandments to the apostles. Then, in verse three, Luke points out that Jesus spoke to the apostles about the kingdom of God.

Luke points out how the Apostles received Jesus's words. Jesus instructed them about the Kingdom of God – both about God himself, about what God had done through Christ, and about the promises of the gospel in God's kingdom. Jesus also gave them commands – he instructed them in the right way to respond to God's kingdom with faith and repentance, and then how to live in God's kingdom, through obedience and love. In short, Jesus gave the Apostles his Word.

But as important as that forty-day period was, between Christ's resurrection and his ascension, Jesus's revelation of his Word did not cease when he went up to heaven. Rather, he commissioned the twelve not just to be witnesses to what they had seen him do and teach (though, he certainly did commission them to do that [Stott, 15]) ... but he also commissioned them to be his

~~apostles, and he explained to them how he teaches them through the power of the Holy Spirit.~~

An apostle, John Stott explains, by the very word in Greek, “was an envoy, delegate or ambassador, sent out with a message and carrying the authority of the sender.” [Stott, 16] Jesus, in other words, commissioned the Apostles not just to repeat what they had heard him say, but to continue to speak on his behalf. And when he did, he didn’t just trust their human judgment about what to say. But he established that he would work in and through them in a special way by the Holy Spirit. Luke tells us in verse two that even before his ascension Jesus taught the Apostles through the Holy Spirit. And that continued after his ascension. Through the Spirit, Jesus continued to speak authoritatively through his commissioned ambassadors, the Apostles.

And the Apostles not only spoke on Jesus’s behalf. They also wrote on his behalf. And they oversaw others who ministered with them to write on their behalf. Every book of the New Testament is written by an Apostle or by someone who worked closely with and under the authorizing supervision of an Apostle. Mark worked under Peter. Luke wrote under Paul. And so, through the Apostles, Jesus continued to teach about the Kingdom of God and the commandments of God. And that is how we got the New Testament.

It's been a common tendency to try to set Jesus and the Apostles against each other. Some people claim to love Jesus but have more mixed feelings about the Apostle Paul, for example. But Luke reminds us that we cannot make such a separation. It's true that Paul and Peter and others wrote with their own minds and their own personality. But they did so as Jesus's authorized representatives. And by the Holy Spirit, Jesus continued to teach, Luke tells us, through them.

---

Jesus does not work in exactly the same way today ... but he does continue to actively teach in the world, through his Word.

That Word is no longer being written today as new revelation – that was part of the foundational period of the Apostles. But Jesus is still actively teaching. The foundation may be complete, but the Church is still being built. And Jesus builds his Church by teaching. And Jesus continues to teach today through his Word.

That's what we have in front of us tonight. In the Bible – in the Old Testament and New Testament, we have the words of the prophets and the apostles. But we don't just have their words. We have Jesus's words for us, revealed through them. He is the one who continues to teach his Church.

In every word of this book, we have the teaching of Jesus for us, and for the people of God as a whole, across time and space. Through the Bible Jesus continues to teach.

But here's the thing. That statement could be said about any author – including an author who is dead and gone and personally inactive in the world today. In a sense we could talk about how John Calvin, or Martin Luther, or Tim Keller, or, for that matter, the Founding Fathers, or Karl Marx, or Adam Smith, or any dead author “continues” to teach us today through the words they wrote.

And though Jesus still lives – there is a way in which that sense of the phrase does describe one aspect of how Jesus continues to teach in the world.

But Luke has much more in mind than that. Because Jesus is not absent from this world. Jesus promised to still be with his people. Jesus continues to work through the Holy Spirit. And Jesus, Luke tells us in verse one, continues not just to teach, but also to “do” – to act, to work. Jesus is still active in the world today, and one way he is active is through his Word.

This book is not like other books. The Bible itself speaks of the Word of God – it speaks of itself – as being different than other words and other books.

As John Frame explains it, in the Bible, God's Word is an extension of God's power, his authority, and his presence.

First, God accomplishes powerful acts by his Word. In Genesis 1 we read how God created the world with his Word. Hebrews 1:3 tells us that Jesus continues to hold the universe together "by the word of his power." The Word of God is an extension of God's power, as he works in the world.

It's also an extension of his authority. God's Word has authority over his creatures – whether he uses it to name them, as we see in Genesis 1, or to give them commandments, as we see throughout the Bible.

But third, God's Word is also an extension of his presence. By his Word, God not only relays information about himself to us, but he actually draws close to us, and works in us. That's why the author of Hebrews could write that "the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

As John Frame points out, the Bible readily <sup>God's words are</sup> ascribes the attributes of God to the Words of God: It is described as "righteous (Ps. 119:7), faithful (Ps. 119:86), wonderful (Ps. 119:129), holy (2 Tim. 3:15), eternal (Ps. 119: 89, 160), omnipotent (Gen. 18:14; Isa. 55:11), and perfect (Ps. 19:7). Only God has these attributes

in total perfection.” And so, Frame concludes, “the word is God.” [Frame, 48]

And we are told as much in the beginning of John’s Gospel. There we read “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” [1:1] John goes on to identify Jesus as the Word. One take-away from this is that Jesus is God. But also, at the same time, Frame points out, John is identifying “God’s speech” with God himself. [Frame, 48-49]

Now, this can perplex us, and on some level it is a mystery. We need to be careful not to misunderstand it. As Frame explains, this is not a call for us to literally worship the physical book of the Bible, bowing down to the paper and ink. The paper and ink are, of course, finite ~~creatures~~ <sup>aspects of creation</sup>. And yet ... “the message of the Bible, what it says, is divine,” Frame writes, “and we should receive it with praise and worship.” [Frame, 49]

---

Now ... if our heads are spinning at this point, let’s step back to re-focus on what we’re really saying this evening here from Acts chapter one.

The point of all it is this: Through the Bible, Jesus is still teaching. His Word is right here. It’s before you this evening. It’s in your hands. And it’s not a dead word on the page. It is living and active. Jesus continues to actively teach and work in our hearts and in this world, through his Word.

---

Do you think of the Word of God that way? Do you treat the Bible that way?

This is why Bible reading is not just about downloading information into our brains. But it's also – and often even more importantly – about drawing close to Jesus, knowing Jesus, and being taught by Jesus. Through his Word Jesus will continue to teach you and to act in your life – to instruct you in his commandments, to teach you about his kingdom, and to be present with you.

So the first way that Jesus continues to work and to teach is through his Word.

---

## **His Spirit**

The second way that Jesus continues to work and to teach is through his Spirit. And we see this in verses two and five.

First, in verse two, Luke highlights that Jesus's ministry – even before his ascension – was accomplished through the Holy Spirit. And that reality becomes even more clear after Jesus's ascension.

To highlight the importance of the Holy Spirit, Jesus orders the apostles in verse four not to go out and do the work of ministry he has called them to until the Holy Spirit has been poured out on them for that work. They

need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit in order to do the work he has called them to do.

Jesus began to work and to teach through the power of the Holy Spirit. And now, after his ascension, he would continue to work and to teach through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is the One who connects Jesus, who has ascended to heaven, with the world here, where Jesus still works and teaches.

And Luke wants to be clear that ~~it's not that~~ this arrangement is <sup>NOT</sup> new. Though the distance the Spirit *in verse*  
bridges may be greater now, Luke points out that even *+ two*  
when Jesus was physically on earth, he still taught and worked in people's heart through the Holy Spirit.

Since his ascension, Jesus has continued to work in the world, from heaven, by the Holy Spirit.

In the Apostolic age – as he laid down the foundation for his Church after his earthly ministry – he worked through the Holy Spirit in his apostles and prophets to reveal the fullness of his word, and to authenticate the gospel proclamation to the world. This work and authentication included miraculous gifts, with the Apostles performing many of the same miracles that Jesus did, in order to show forth that they really were his authorized ambassadors, acting with his power, and speaking with his authority.

Today, now that that foundation has been laid in the Apostles and prophets, we don't see the same revelatory or miraculous works of the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit is still truly at work today.

And ... if we're honest ... I think in our circles, we can tend to have a somewhat anemic view of the Spirit's work. If we're honest, we tend to think of ministry and spiritual growth within what Charles Taylor has called the "imminent frame." We focus, almost exclusively, on the practical, measurable, human aspects and mechanics of it. We tend to think of spiritual growth the same way we think of physical growth: as simply following a set of natural laws and mechanisms. We tend to think of spiritual knowledge as being just like any other knowledge: as just acquiring facts and mental skills.

And to be sure, the Bible tells us that there are ordinary aspects to our spiritual growth and learning – God does not work wholly in some other-worldly way, but he uses many of the natural means he has established in creation.

But just because the means are ordinarily natural, that doesn't mean the whole process is completely natural. The Bible tells us that there is a supernatural element to all spiritual growth. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is at work in us, individually and as a community. Moreover, through the Holy Spirit, Jesus himself is teaching us, and working in us.

And in our period of redemptive history he often teaches us and shapes our hearts through the work of illumination by the Holy Spirit. In a variety of ways, he turns on the light in our hearts and minds, so that we can see and perceive something, that may have been right in front of us, but which we might never have seen by our own power alone, had Christ not shone his light on it by the power of the Holy Spirit.

*all along,*

And many of us have had experiences like that. We read or hear a passage of Scripture, and maybe we've heard it many times before. But this time, suddenly, it strikes us deeply. It clicks. It makes sense. For the first time, we really see it. A light has turned on. And it changes our perspective or behavior.

Other times we are dealing with a situation, and a verse of Scripture or a Biblical truth suddenly comes to mind. And we don't know where it came from exactly, but there it is.

Still other times, we see a new connection between a Biblical truth and a situation we are dealing with. Or we intuit the applicability of a truth to a situation in a new way. Or we see a situation with new wisdom or insight or intuition that we didn't see before.

In a variety of ways, we learn and we grow spiritually in ways that we cannot take credit for as our own achievements. And this is because, through the Holy Spirit, Jesus continues to work among us and teach us.

---

And that extends not just to growing and learning. It extends to the very presence of Jesus.

---

A footnote in the ESV points out that in verse four, where it says that Jesus was “staying with them,” it could also be translated that Jesus was “eating with them.”

Gathering together for a meal was one of the key ways that Jesus was present and intimate with his disciples during his earthly ministry. But he didn’t stop doing that after his ascension.

---

At the center of our worship, Jesus has placed a meal. And in that meal, he is not only the sustenance for our souls, but he is the true host of the table. He fellowships with us at his table. And he does that by his Holy Spirit. That’s why, every Lord’s Day, at the table, we ask the Lord to pour out his Spirit on us afresh. We are asking the Spirit to unite us, in a special way, with Christ, in that meal. In the Lord’s Supper, Jesus is present with us here on earth, by his grace, and we, in a great mystery, are also present with him, as the Spirit lifts our hearts up to heaven. And so, every Lord’s Day, we gather together, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we eat a meal in the presence of Christ.

If you are a Christian, then the Spirit is already at work in your heart and in your life. But you need eyes to see it. Recognize that in ways big and small, the Spirit is at

work. And recognize that the Holy Spirit does not work alone, but that it is Christ who is working through him.

And so, the second way that Jesus continues to work and teach in this world is by the Holy Spirit.

## **His Church**

Third and finally, Luke highlights for us here that Jesus continues to work and teach in the world through the Church.

This is highlighted in Jesus's focus on the Apostles, who will serve, as we've seen, as the foundation for Jesus's Church going forward.

Jesus's focus on these leaders is a reminder that Jesus doesn't just build individual Christians. He doesn't just build isolated Christian relationships here or there. Jesus builds his Church.

And as I've pointed out before, that Church is both an organic community, and a structured institution. Both components are important, and God cares about both. Jesus is building both, and he is concerned for both.

The organic community is all the ways we naturally connect with one another as Christians – both in our congregation and beyond it. The structured institution of the Church is the way we are organized within and across congregations. The structured institution includes officers who are ordained and commissioned. It includes formal gatherings for worship, formal structures of authority, formal decision-making processes. Both the organic community and the structured institution are aspects of the life of the Church, and Christ works in and through both.

In the Apostolic age this was exemplified in the ministry of the Apostles, and that, again, is highlighted here. The Apostles, we are reminded in verse two, were chosen by Christ. They were also commissioned by Christ, and empowered in special ways to minister on Christ's behalf.

We don't have apostles in the Church any longer today, as they did in that foundational apostolic era. But again, Jesus continues to build his Church upon that foundation. And as he does, he works through the Church body itself.

He works through the organic church community, as Christians minister to one another, building one another up and bearing one another's burdens. It's not just that Christian relationships are important – its that Jesus works through Christian relationships and community in

special ways. The Bible tells us that the Church is the Body of Christ. We are his members in the world, with Christ as our head. And Christ works through the members of his body – that is the obvious implication of the Biblical metaphor.

When you allow another Christian to minister to you, you're not just allowing another human being to help you out. You're allowing Jesus to work in your life through a portion of his Body.

---

Our plan to start a small group ministry here in our church is not something we're pursuing because that's what all the cool kids are doing, or because we think it would be swell if people in the congregation hung out together a bit more.

We're pursuing that ministry structure for our congregation because we actually believe that the Church is the Body of Christ, and that Christ still works through his Body today. We want our members to grow spiritually and to know the Lord more deeply. And that means preaching the Word to you. It means drawing you close to the Holy Spirit through the means of grace. And it also means connecting you more deeply with the Body of Christ – the Church community. Because through his Body, the Church, Jesus continues to work and to teach both in our lives and in the world.

But it's not just through the informal and organic connections of the Body of Christ that Jesus works. He also works through the structures of the Church as an institution. As we said, Christ called and commissioned his Apostles to a special work – and there are no longer any Apostles on earth who are called to that special work. But that doesn't mean that Jesus stopped calling and commissioning servants that he would work through. In Ephesians 4, the Apostle Paul tells us that Jesus commissions and gifts not only apostles and prophets to his Church, but also evangelists, shepherds, and teachers. And he continues to do that today.

While it's true that I, and the other ministers, bring all our human frailties and our sinful hearts to the work we do, at the very same time, to the extent that we speak God's truth faithfully, we speak not on our own authority, but as Jesus's called and commissioned shepherds, teachers, evangelists, and representatives. And Christ has called and commissioned us and all such leaders in the Church, Paul says, to equip you for the work of ministry, and to build up the body of Christ. [Ephesians 4:11-13]

We live in an age that often simply assumes that institutions and spirituality are set in opposition to one another. And they can be. But that opposition is not inherent. Because Christ has established an institution and he continues to work in it and through it. And for that reason alone, we all desperately need that

institution. The implication of Ephesians 4:11-13 is that if you want Jesus to equip you for ministry, if you want to mature in your faith and knowledge of Christ, if you want to be built up in the Lord, then you need both the community and the institution of the Church. Because Jesus has promised to be at work there in special ways.

## Conclusion

The big take-away from our text this evening – the thing Luke wants us to see – is that even today, from heaven, Jesus continues to work and to teach in the world.

And though he is sovereign over all things, he has chosen to work through certain specific means in special ways. And Luke highlights three of them here: his Word, his Spirit, and his Church. That's where Jesus is especially at work.

And so, if we want to see our lives changed ... if we want to see others' lives changed ... if we want to see the world changed, then that is where we should put our hope: in the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the Church of God.

The world around us, and our sinful human hearts, will always tempt us to look elsewhere – to look to our own abilities or to look to other earthly powers.

But Luke here reminds us that even here on earth, we can receive power and truth from heaven. Because Jesus Christ, seated in heaven, continues to work and to teach here on hearth.

~~He does that~~ through his Word, his Spirit and his Church.

And so, as we place our hope in him, let us look to <sup>the</sup> ways in which he has promised to work, trusting that he who began a good work in us will truly bring it to completion.

Amen.

---

**This sermon draws on material from:**

Calvin, John. *Acts 1-13*. Translated by John W. Fraser and W.J.G. McDonald. Edited by David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1965 (1995 edition).

Frame, John M. *Salvation Belongs to the Lord*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006.

Stott, John. *The Message of Acts*. Revised Edition. BST. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1990 (2020 Revision)

Note: In my preaching I often cite and draw from a range of sources, which includes material from Christians within my theological tradition, Christians outside my theological tradition (in keeping with our church's core value of "Reformed Catholicity"), and also (following the Apostle Paul's example in Acts 17) non-Christians who are well outside of Christian orthodoxy and orthopraxy. And so, when I cite an author or a source, that citation should not be understood or construed as me necessarily agreeing with, endorsing, or recommending to others anything else from that author or source, except for what I explicitly say I agree with, endorse, or recommend. When engaging with different materials and thinkers, all Christians must exercise wisdom and discernment to determine what is helpful, appropriate, and edifying for each person, taking into account their current needs, wisdom, and spiritual maturity.

