

Acts: The Next Chapter
THE UNEXPECTED SOLUTION
Acts 1:6-11



The return of Jesus Christ has been the hope of Christians since the beginning. As long as we keep this hope in mind, it has a powerful and positive effect on our lives.

Like every good thing, however, the hope of Christ's return becomes negative when we develop an unhealthy obsession with it. It can cause us to distance ourselves from fellow-believers who don't see things unfolding exactly as we do. It can distract us from the mission our Lord gave us.

Most seriously, it can cause us to give up on the world and its people. Rather than taking the baton Jesus hands us (Acts 1:1-5), we sit back and wait for our blessed hope to arrive. Rather than being a part of the solution, like overly dependent children, we wait for Jesus to solve all our problems.

After reading Luke's Gospel, in all likelihood, Theophilus was impressed with Jesus of Nazareth and was able to see how he fulfilled the Old Testament's predictions of the Messiah, but he still had questions about the movement his friend, Luke, had joined. He struggled to see how the church was a continuation of Messiah's ministry. He suspected that the church was the disciples' way of keeping a good thing going.

Luke's primary purpose for writing Acts was to show that Jesus' ministry didn't come to an end when he left this earth, but continued with the church. In Acts 1:1-5, Luke showed that Jesus intentionally passed the baton of his ministry on to his disciples. Why? Because he fully expected them to continue his ministry and movement.

The next six verses, Acts 1:6-11, show that there was no way the disciples could have come up with the idea of the church. Why? Because they were expecting something totally different. Rather than taking the baton Jesus had just handed to them and running with it, they expected to watch Jesus run the world from Jerusalem (v. 6). Rather than being part of the solution, they expected Jesus to solve the world's problems. Instead, the disciples got an unexpected solution.

- Instead of getting a timeline for a political kingdom, they got a challenge to _____ v. 7
- Instead of personal power, they got the promise of power _____ v. 8a
- Instead of a judge's gavel, the disciples got the _____ v. 8b
- Instead of an earthly king, the disciples got an _____ v. 9
- Instead of fulfillment, the disciples got a new _____ vv. 10-11

While the disciples never gave up their hope of Christ's return, their prayer in Acts 4:29 tells us that they did not become so obsessed with it that they gave up on the world and its people. Instead of asking God to rapture them from this evil world, they prayed, *"Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness."*

As short as it is, this prayer speaks volumes. It tells us that they got it. They had stopped waiting for Jesus to solve the problems of their world and saw themselves as part of the solution. Let's pray that we get it too.