

The Church on the Move
The Holy Spirit and Missions
Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 1:1-8; 2:36-47
Sermon Outline

Introduction: Unlike other messianic movements in Israel between 160 BC and AD 135, the movement surrounding Jesus took hold and by the 4th Century became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Why? Because God was in it.

I) The Holy Spirit and the Mission of Jesus

A) By his Spirit, Jesus is the prime missionary

- *Acts 1.1: In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach...*
- *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."*
- *Matthew 28.20: "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

B) By his Spirit, Jesus is up to all sorts of good in and through us

Transforming communication

Remitting sins

Causing love to flow

Awing people and drawing them into the church

C) Two questions

1) Did we kill Jesus?

Acts 2.36: Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

2) Signs and wonders today?

II) What should we expect?

A) To be moved around

Acts 1.8: You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Matt. 28.18-19: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore...

B) To meet him as we go

- *Matthew 28.20: "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) At least five major messianic movements happened between 160 BC and AD 135 (the Maccabean revolt, the movement of Jesus (AD 30), the first Jewish war (AD 70), the Kitos War (AD 115), and the Bar Kokhba War (AD 135). The Jesus movement alone survived and thrived until in the 4th Century AD it became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Why? What explanation do we find in Matthew 28:16-20 and Acts 1:1-8?
- 2) Itemize the impact of the Spirit upon the church and the city in Acts 2. Where do we see similar impact today? Is anything missing? If so, why do you think it is missing?
- 3) Through whom did the Spirit work “signs and wonders” in Acts 2? Why that group? What do we need today to make people pay fresh heed to the apostles’ teaching (i.e., the New Testament): at City Hall, at Columbia University, in the business world?
- 4) The people were “cut to the heart” when Peter said, “God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36). Is there any sense in which it is appropriate to say that we, like them, crucified Jesus?
- 5) In both Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:19 Jesus tells us (the church) that we are going to be a people who are on the move. How often have you moved in the past ten years? Have you done so because you chose to or because you had to? If you chose to, why did you? Have you seen or sought Christ’s missional hand in any of these moves? What might it mean to think missionally about your next move?
- 6) “Moving” does not necessarily mean changing physical location. There are plenty of missional opportunities where we presently are. What matters above all is whether we see ourselves consciously as missionaries. What inhibits your missional purpose in the places you presently frequent (your workplace, your neighborhood, your voluntary associations, your social networks)?
- 7) Jesus promises to be “with us” in a heightened way when we “go” on missions (whether we actually move to a new place or simply behave missionally where we are). How have you experienced his presence more intimately as a result of a conscious choice to be missional?