



An Unstoppable Force

Acts 1:1-14 | Ryan Pfeiffer | January 11, 2026

WHAT IS THE CHURCH? HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE PART OF IT?

We are going to be in Acts all year... taking breaks for deeper dives.

1. Ask you to bring your Bibles... consider bringing a hard copy!
2. Don't have one? We'll give you one or you can buy one in the Cafe.
3. Grab this card... we want to help you lean in... Act on what you hear/see!

As we study Acts, we trace the steps of a 30 yr journey- Jerusalem-> Rome...

Thru HS outpourings, persecutions, shipwrecks, miraculous healings and death defying courage.

We'll see Church as **an unstoppable force** that heralded the gospel to world!

But also see the struggles of Church... fear, hypocrisy, prejudice, legalism.

And it all begins rt here w/ 120 men/ women gathered around Jesus...not with action, but w/ waiting; not w/ power, but w/ promise; not w/ certainty, but w/ trust.

FOCUS. It begins with a group of men and women who are willing to gather... 1) around Jesus 2) his Mission 3) in Prayer

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

FIRST. MEN AND WOMEN CALLED TO GATHER AROUND JESUS.

6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

The book of Acts begins w/ men/ women gathered around the resurrected Jesus... then in vs 9 he was taken up before their very eyes...

This teaches us that the Church is not a human invention... THE CHURCH IS THE CREATION OF GOD. Jesus himself says in Matthew 16:18 I will build my church...

There are 4 principle metaphors the Bible uses to describe the Church.

- The Bride of Christ. Rev 21:2 "Come, I will show you the Bride..." Love affair.
- The Body of Christ. 1 Cor 12:27 "You are the body of Christ..." Oneness/Unity
- The Temple of God. 1 Cor 3:16 "You are God's temple" Sacredness.
- The Household of God. Eph 2:19 "you are... the household of God." Relational.

The Church is holy, sacred, supernatural...God's gift to us. BUT not perfect!
Just read v15 and how Peter leads in replacing Judas... who betrayed Jesus!

When we see the Church primarily as a human institution... we're vulnerable:

- Wounded Warrior. Past hurts. Guarded. Cynical. Withdrawn.
- The Consumer. treating church as a restaurant... pay... yelp... About me!
- The Insta. "For you" page. Entertain. Echo-chamber. Affirm v. Challenge.
- The Weekend Warrior. Sundays only. Dine and dash kinda mindset.

SECOND. MEN AND WOMEN GATHERED FOR A MISSION.

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."

You will be my witnesses... meaning we are sent from God to: neighbor...

The entire book of acts is structured around this framework of Witness.

1. Acts 1-7 Jerusalem
2. Acts 8-12 Judea/ Samaria
3. Acts 13-28 To the Ends of the Earth.

The point is every one of us has a mission in life...

CS Lewis "The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs." –Mere Christianity.

The love of Jesus that pursued/ saved us... is nudging, pressing us to others.

Here at NC3 you are going to feel that nudge, that press to share your faith, to love your city... to love this world...

Bonhoeffer– "The church is the church only when it exists for others."

THIRD. MEN AND WOMEN GATHERED IN PRAYER.

14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

First notice this phrase... They all joined **TOGETHER** constantly...

Can we be the Church if we don't gather?

The Grk word for together is συνέρχομαι (synerchomai) = The root word, syner → synergy = two or more things work together to produce a result that is greater than the sum of what each could achieve on its own.

There's a level of faith God is calling you toward you can't reach on your own. Never have there been more alternatives to physically gathering than today. The average attendance at church in America is 1.7/month. But what if we challenged ourselves to push against the current?

Second part of v14... They all joined together constantly **IN PRAYER**...

Before they were sent out... they were called to WAIT... in prayer.

This gives us **2 wonderful insights** into being the church:

- Waiting might mean a habit of **pausing and turning** to God before we act.
- 2. There is a unique gift and grace for us in **praying with others.**

There's a unique synergy of spiritual power when we pray with others.

"Have you ever said, 'Well, all we can do now is pray'? ... When we come to the end of ourselves, we come to the beginning of God." – Billy Graham