

“What now?” Acts 1:1-11 Christ Church Huntingdon 17th May 2020

- V8
 - Have you ever wondered if this world is going anywhere?
 - Whether there's any actual plan?
 - And maybe during lockdown you've asked that question more often and more personally.
 - Not just is this world going anywhere, but *Is my life going anywhere?*
- This book of Acts (which we start studying today) is incredibly important.
 - It's an exciting book, because it's a story. (emot farewell. Falling out windows. Peter left at door!)
 - It's a wonderful book because it focuses on Jesus Christ and his wonderful & +ve good news.
 - But above all it's a relevant book because it shows us **God's plan** for the world, and how **we** can get on board with that programme.
- That's what we are going to look at today. **God's plan** and **Our Part**.
 - I don't think there's much more important in life than to know where the planet is going, and what our part in it is. Do you?
- **So let's launch in at v1, and I've called this sermon now what? (3 key phrases help us get our bearings)**
 - First of all I wonder if you know who wrote this book? Clue “former book”
 - Shout it out? (come on matt, lizzie, Nicola. Jonathan). Clue.
 - The guy who wrote a gospel. Mt, Mk, Lk, John. (claim yours!)
 - If you read story in ch16 it quietly turns from “THEM” to “WE”- He's in it! V close to events.
 - (won't do it now) Read beg Luke, can play spot the difference between the 2 books...
 - he made a careful analysis of everything happened CERTAIN! What a relief (claim yours!)
 - And he wrote it to **Theophilus**.
 - (may have been an important Roman individual to whom the book was dedicated)
 - Or a code name: Philus- lover of Theo- God.
 - Either way the key word here is BEGAN. V1. Implication- CONTINUES.

- It's not that volume 1 was the story of Jesus, and volume 2 the story of the church (could put it like that and there's no other book in the bible that tells this story).
 - Rather Book 1 (Luke) is the Story of Jesus, and Book 2 (Acts) is the story of Jesus!!.
 - Part 1 (Luke)- his ministry in person from earth.
 - Part 2 (Acts)- his ministry through his apostles in the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - That's what makes Acts such a brilliant and exciting book to read.
 - Cos in a sense we are in this!
 - We are in 2nd part of **Jesus' story** for the world.
 - chapter 29. (There is a church planting movement called Acts 29).
 - (now be careful- like last week in Ps, we are not like for King.
 - And here we are not like for like with apostles).
 - But the risen and ascended Lord Jesus is still at work in our day writing the pages of his story in Huntingdon, and Godmanchester and St Ives, and Brno wherever you live!
 - This book tells us what Jesus is doing in the world.
 - In v2-5 we get a bit of a timeline. Takes some untangling- have a go in Lifegroups.
- But for our first point, the key to understanding God's plan is that word KINGDOM.
 - V3. Kingdom..... V6. Kingdom.....28:31!
 - (theme that tops & tails book- in final verse of book, Paul. Still prch K!
 - The Old testament promised a day when God would rule the world through his King.
 - We looked at that in Psalm 2 a couple of weeks ago pinboard. (catchup Rx3)
 - And what Luke has been telling us for 24 ch is that this King is Jesus of Naz.
 - But he's a king unlike any other King (even those who knew OT got it wrong)
 - He wears a crown of thorns. (reference v3 to his suffering).
 - He died not to start a **religion** showing us how to be Good, but rather in a **rescue** where he rescues those who are bad. George: GRACE.

- And so this book starts and ends with the Kingdom of Jesus.

You see here's God's plan for the world:

- For all the earth to bow to Jesus.
- If we are in any doubt about his rule, all the events referred to in this section.
 - DEATH: Suffering. King of LOVE
 - V3. Resurrection. King of LIFE Many convincing proofs. That's Luke! Certainty!
 - (v4 Dead men don't eat!)
 - And he what's going to happen next.
 - Ascension (church celebrates 40 days after Easter- next thurs).
 - Pretty unique!
 - King on God's throne.
- But they still haven't got it.
 - And we might not have done also.
 - V6
 - Calvin says there are as many misunderstandings as there are words in that question.
 - **OK they got it right** that there was Kingdom.
 - Not a geographical kingdom, like United Kingdom
 - But God's Kingdom.
 - And they got it right that Jesus was the King of that Kingdom.
- BUT, You see here's God's plan for the world:
 - For all the earth to bow to Jesus.
 - V8 Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth.
- I wonder if we have grasped this "plan".
 - A Christian is not someone who makes a leap into the dark
 - But rather who gets with reality and steps into the light.

- ▲ Read a [BBC news item](#) about two women that ignored lockdown.
 - They drove from Manchester to Blackpool and had a BBQ on the promenade.
 - But soon the fire brigade were called out to attend to a small blaze that they had created.
 - I like what the spokesman for Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service said.
 - *"It is disappointing that a minority of people are continuing to put themselves and other people at risk, and waste the time of the emergency services," a LFRS spokesperson said.*
 - *"It is also difficult to understand why people would travel to Blackpool and have a barbecue on the promenade late at night in the rain."*
- I don't think they had **got with the programme**. StAY AT HOME!
- It's quite funny!
- But we can be the same.
- Most common chat with people: that's great for you. I'd never want to challenge anyone else's beliefs. That's fine.
- *As if Jesus is a cleaning product in your house, and you choose Jesus, I choose sthing else*
- *He's not a preference, he's the KING!*
 - *CAN I TALK TO YOU FOR A MOMENT!* Teenager, mother, grandad,
 - Have you grasped God's plan? Or are we ignoring the reality of the universe.
 - When someone becomes a Christian they are recognising J is King.
 - Handing over the steering wheel of life to someone who can drive their lives far better and more wonderful way.
 - Have you done that? Have you bowed to King Jesus.
 - And Whenever someone fights sin
 - Are you living under him today? Seeking to have J as King.

- That's first point. **Getting clear on God's Plan.**
- Then we can get **clear on our part.**
- HOW does that rule extend across the world? Not rocket science.
- How do people come into this Kingdom, and bow before the King of Kings?
- THEY NEED SOMEONE TO TELL THEM.
 - END OF EARTH: MAP!
 - Jerusalem (ch1-7)
 - Judea & Samaria (8-12)
 - Ends Earth (rest of book)
 - Hence **ripples!**
- Keyword here is WITNESS. v8.
 - Now we are not witnesses of the resurrection- v22.
 - They had a special role. Think more on that next week.
 - This book is the story of the passing on of that message.
 - But as they handed on the baton to others, it was eventually handed on to us.
- Here's the massive thing.
 - God has decided to advance his kingdom through a message and messengers.
 - He didn't decide to do it by actions.
 - "Preach the gospel and use words if you must"- not preaching the gospel.
 - Nor by rituals.
- They were to share a message.
 - Very logical.
 - Jesus is King. Proved by death, resurrection, shortly ascension.
 - How are people going to know that?
 - Reason that couple culpable is everyone knows Situation. Words on internet. Tv. Motorway signs, newspapers saying "stay at home"

- WE are to pass on message (positive) Jesus Christ is Lord! Kingdom belongs to Jesus.
- How tragic when we get this wrong.
 - When Christian organisations replace the great commission with the great commandment.
 - Can't share the good news without loving neighbour.
 - It's why Emily's at the foodbank and why council on Thurs thinking how bless H.
- But on top of that how we can reach out.
But it doesn't take long
- What me, talk to Ron or Kathy or Alan?
 - It's scary.
 - There needs to be extra energy. HOLY SPIRIT
 - Explosion of God's help coming on the scene, which would carry disciples from Jerusalem to
- Don't just stand there looking at the sky will you?
Jesus is coming back soon.
- We have a job to do.
 - What does that look like?
 - Perhaps start with
 - You and me on thurs night chatting to neighbs.
 - Striking up conversation and praying
 - Do you ever think about what it's all about.
 - RICO- crossing "the pain barrier". **Do you believe in the HS?!**
 - inviting friend to one of 2 events.
 - Quiz Night. Stepping stone
 - These Services – spread the word.