

Reality in the Book of Acts Eng to German

by George Verwer

The book of Acts emphasizes the power and work of the Holy Spirit in the early church, and the importance of prayer, evangelism, and being filled with the Holy Spirit for living out the book of Acts reality.

Duration: 50:00

Scripture: Acts 1:14, Acts 4:31, Acts 5:42, Acts 20:20, Acts 20:31, Romans 15:20, 2 Corinthians 10:16

Topics: "Reality"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares personal anecdotes about his relationship with his fiancée and their commitment to abstain from physical intimacy until they were engaged. He then discusses the importance of evangelism and cites examples from the book of Acts, highlighting the apostle Paul's dedication to spreading the message of Jesus Christ. The speaker emphasizes the need for believers to be involved in face-to-face evangelism and shares his own experiences of witnessing in a bus station. He also mentions the biblical basis for global evangelism and the importance of training programs to ensure that individuals are qualified and equipped for ministry.

Transcript

We want to have some study together now in the book of Acts. Reality in the book of Acts, you can call this message. There are many ways to study God's word.

There are many ways to present the truth of God. But tonight we especially want to dig right into the text of the book of Acts. We want to keep in mind our day of prayer and fasting tomorrow.

And we see one of the most important emphases in the book of Acts is the emphasis on prayer. And how God works through prayer. We're going to see some of the other emphases.

Some messages we hear new truths or important truths. And in other messages these truths are reconfirmed as we see them even more in the word of God. And that's what we're going to do tonight.

And it's my prayer that during your time on OM you really will get to know the book of Acts. Someone says this book is really the Acts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is referred to more than 50 times in the book of Acts.

And of course we see the work of God being directed by the Holy Spirit. It's one of the reasons we want to spend a lot of time in prayer tomorrow. To get more direction, more guidance from the Holy Spirit.

We have many ideas. We have many burdens. But we want the Holy Spirit to guide us.

Let's look at some verses from the text. Of course we all know Acts 1.8. We've probably read and studied it many times. Let's read it again.

But ye shall receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth. How many have that memorized? That's encouraging. Because certainly that is a verse we all want to know.

That is the final command and promise of the Lord Jesus before he ascended into heaven. Don't take time to turn to it, but note 2 Corinthians 10.16 Where it speaks about the regions beyond and going to where the gospel had not been proclaimed. And also Romans 15.20 Both of these verses emphasize the regions beyond.

Last week we emphasized the five-fold vision that God had given us in this work. The subcontinent. The Muslim world.

Europe. The whole world through the ships. And then the vision of literature and communication through every method.

That's the biblical basis for that. Here it is, right here. Many of God's people that I'm involved in teaching, because a lot of my ministry is a teaching ministry, they've never seen these verses in God's Word.

I've been praying through the new prayer cards that have been just produced out in Australia. Is it 62 or 68 countries? They included a few more desperately unreached areas in the uttermost parts of the earth. And really, unless you see that the emphasis of OM is a biblical emphasis, I wouldn't want you to really get involved in all this.

So they had this emphasis in the book of Acts. And believe me, they had some very interesting mobilizations. Notice, for example, Acts 8.1. Acts 8.1. And Saul was consenting unto his death.

He was at the death of Stephen. He agreed with the death of Stephen. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church, which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea, Samaria, except the apostles.

You can imagine when this persecution hit Jerusalem. The mechanics were working around the clock to get the vehicles ready to get out of Jerusalem. If you think that was the case, your history lesson really was a bit mixed up.

Probably they had to take a train. Probably they had to walk. You can imagine just some of the hardships and some of these difficulties they went through, and yet how God used it to spread his word.

That is a true picture of how God's providence sometimes gets more accomplished than the perfect, well-thought-through program. Let's go back to chapter 1. Acts 1.14. Let's read that verse. These all continued with one accord in prayer, supplication with the women, and marrying the mother of Jesus and with his brethren.

From the earliest period in the church, we find the importance of the prayer meeting. We're living in a day when many churches no longer have a prayer meeting. Even good churches.

I think we're seeing come to pass that which Tozer once said. And you can pick up a free copy of Gems from Tozer tomorrow on the free literature table in the office. And you can pick up a free copy of Gems from Tozer on the free literature table in the office.

And it's a good book to meditate on every day. When the Holy Spirit left many churches, no changes would be made whatsoever. Everything would go on as usual.

And if the Holy Spirit leaves operation mobilization, that the whole thing will completely fold up. And the Holy Spirit is calling us to prayer. I don't know if you've ever taken time to study the prayer life of Jesus Christ.

Here's some references you can look up tomorrow. Prayer at his baptism, Luke 3, 21. Luke 3, 21.

Just write the reference. Prayer on his first preaching tour, Mark 1, 35. Prayer at his first healing, Luke 5, 16.

Prayer at the choice of the twelve, Luke 6, 12. Prayer before feeding 5,000, Matthew 14, 19. After Peter's confession or before it, Luke 9, 18.

9, 18. Before the transfiguration, Luke 9, 28. Before the transfiguration, Luke 9, 18.

Matthew 4, 25. Prior to the Lord's prayer, Luke 11, 1. Luke 11, 1. Before the Lord's prayer. At the resurrection of Lazarus, John 11.

At the blessing of the children, Matthew 19, 13. At the coming of the Greeks, John 12, 27. At the Lord's Supper, Matthew 26, 26.

Prayer for Peter, Luke 22, 32. Prayer for the Holy Spirit, John 14, 16. Prayer on the road to Emmaus, Luke 24, 30.

Prior to his ascension, Luke 24, 50. The Lord's prayer. The high priestly prayer, the chapter, the 17th chapter of John.

We find also the Lord Jesus' prayer. It rang through the entire night. Recorded in the book of Luke.

And as I made this study on the prayer life of Jesus Christ. My heart just cried out. Why don't Christians pray? Why don't they come to the prayer meeting? Why don't they have family prayer? We all go around claiming our greatest goal is to become more like Jesus Christ.

Yet when it comes to the practical level, we don't want to do that which he did. I believe we need more spontaneous prayer. As we walk down the streets.

Sometimes I'm walking with a brother. I just start to talk to the Lord. First time I do that, it tends to scare the person a little bit.

But what do I have to do? Do I have to take a prayer mat out? Bow down, put water on my head and pray to the God? He says we're to call him friends. We're no longer just his servant. We are his friends.

And I like this little notice that's up here. Somebody changed it. Prayer changes things.

Let's look at some more verses in the book of Acts. Look at those verses at the end of Acts chapter 2. I've dwelt on these before, so I want to cover them quickly right now. What are the emphasis we see here? We see an emphasis on prayer.

There in verse 42. We see an emphasis on fellowship. We see an emphasis on the breaking of bread.

We see an emphasis on sound doctrine. Acts 2. Verses 42 through 47. I want you to make sure you get that.

Study those verses. We also see unselfishness. We see this spirit-based unselfishness coming into their lives.

Notice verse 45. And they sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need. We find this later in Acts chapter 4. Barnabas even brought his house and his lands, sold it for the cause of the gospel.

This was not a legalism. This was not communism. This was reality.

There was a need. People were sensing their need. And they were a caring community, not a conglomerated congregation.

Perhaps they had heard, it's more blessed to give than to receive. So this was an emphasis in the book of Acts. And then there was an emphasis on praise.

Notice verse 47. Praising God. Praising God.

And having favor with all the people. And then the Lord added to the church. Doesn't talk about decisions for Christ in the book of Acts.

Talks about the Lord adding to the church. Notice over in Acts chapter 7. Chapter 6. Verse 1 and verse 7. What does it say? In those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Verse 7. The number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem.

Our ministry is not a ministry of collecting decisions. Our ministry is a ministry of making disciples. Now Acts chapter 6 actually is a very important chapter.

Because we find that they had to choose some deacons, some practical men for the work in the church. So that the main spiritual leaders would not all be just caught up in all the practical things, the serving of the tables it refers to. There in verse 2. Now notice the qualifications for these practical men.

This is important because many of you are going to be involved in a practical ministry. The people in the practical ministry in Bromley enable me to give more time to the ministry of the word and prayer, which I should be doing. But that job is very important.

Look at the qualifications. Verse 3. We want 7 men of honest report. They've got a good testimony.

And it is absolutely biblical that we write to your churches and find out if we can get a good report concerning you before you are brought into even a training program such as this. Number 2, full of the Holy Spirit. Number 3, wisdom.

Pretty heavy qualifications for men that are just going to serve tables. God's qualifications are high. And I don't think we have any privilege to lower them.

And this is one of the reasons we believe that training programs are so important. Especially when in many churches, not all, but in many churches these principles of discipleship are not taught to the young people. Of course it's interesting, Stephen was one of those men.

Verse 5, a man full of faith. What do we find Stephen doing in the 7th chapter? We find him preaching in the open air. And we feel this.

Even though your work throughout the week is practical work, we feel that as Stephen on the weekends and other times you should be out evangelizing. This is a biblical principle and it is a principle of this movement. And it's one of the toughest principles that we have.

Even to the point that you will find some leaders who have been paralyzed and brought into a state in which they are no longer involved in this kind of evangelism, even leaders. It's not your job to judge them. First of all they may be doing it in a time when others may not even notice it.

But I think we as leaders need your prayers. Because sometimes after 10, 20 years the evangelistic zeal for the streets and the doors and the tracks, it can begin to grow a little cold and so many other things crowd into our time and we find that this is neglected. And after 20 years the zeal for the doors and the tracks and the free gatherings can slowly become cold and so many other things take away our time and we need your prayers.

I would like to say in my own situation. It's often been a nervous battle to get out. I told God if I couldn't get out in evangelism I didn't want to preach anymore.

I don't want to tell people to do what I'm not doing myself. And hardly a week ever passes when I'm not in the streets with my tracts and with my books and whatever other method. Tell you of all the things I've done this year preaching to many great crowds, the greatest blessings have come sometimes in the door-to-door work.

And especially when I went along door-to-door with my own wife, something we had neglected for a long time. One of the first dates I ever had with her, long before we were married, the first or second date, we just went door-to-door. The third date and the five dates after that, we studied the book of Acts.

After that we went out into the streets in tract distribution. Then we used to have our dates in a bus station in Chicago. We would call this watch and pray.

She would pray and watch me and I would go out and witness and try to lead people to Christ in the bus station. Now I have to make a confession, after we got engaged, and I was a little bit strict on the physical side of things, so though it was totally contrary to everything within me, I decided not to kiss her until we got engaged. And so then we used to go to the bus station and there was a very good place behind the baggage lockers.

I just thought I should share that so you'd know that I had the balance. How I yearned that all of us in the work would not lose our zeal and our discipline to be involved even as Stephen, a practical man, out in face-to-face evangelism. This kind of evangelism is absolutely basic to the book of Acts.

Look at the last few verses of chapter five. Chapter five, verse forty-two, beaten, in verse forty. They were told not to speak any more, and yet they went right back, and it says in verse forty-two, daily in the temple, in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

This is just one of many verses. Look at Acts seventeen, seventeen. Here we see the Apostle Paul, who was a busy man, and yet we find him in the marketplace.

What does it say? Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews and with the devout persons, and in the marketplace daily with them that met with him. We have the same emphasis in Acts twenty-two. We see the public ministry and the house-to-house ministry.

And then we see it also in chapter twenty, verse thirty-one, where we really see the compassion and the reality in the life of Paul. Therefore, watch and remember that for the space of three years, I have ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears. Night and day, tears, compassion, action.

This is the emphasis we find in the early church. Another emphasis and another reality we must not miss. Another prayer meeting in Acts four-thirty-one.

Acts four-thirty-one. Another verse worth memorizing. When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together.

They were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. I believe if we are going to do what God wants us to do this year, we need Holy Ghost boldness in this work. That we may go fearlessly, not foolishly, but fearlessly out and declare His name.

I started speaking in the open air, I guess when I was about seventeen, I was scared stiff. I was converted in fifty-five in a one-night stand, villagrame meeting, and by fifty-seven I was hiring buses and taking all my friends into the crusade. And I remember it was so full we couldn't get in.

And so we went out and we spoke in the open air, right in the center of 42nd Street, New York City. And God just gave us the courage to open our mouths. I used to go down into the New York City underground.

I remember once going in with about fifteen thousand tracks. There were two of us. Actually I almost got killed that day by an underground train.

But we'd start on one end of the train, we'd go right through the entire train, and everybody, by the time we were finished, half of them were sitting there reading the word of God. These were not things we did after five years of training or after going on OM. We had just been born again.

I was only seventeen. But the Holy Spirit gave that burden and that zeal to evangelize every day, everywhere, whatever the cost. I then started to go into the jails and preaching in the jail.

And we saw some converted. And God, I believe, wants to give us Holy Ghost bonus. Now, we're not all going to be the same.

We don't believe everyone goes around doing exactly the same thing. And we don't expect everybody to go running through the underground giving out tracks. But everybody can do something.

According as God gives you the grace. Even now my approach probably is more to sit next to someone and just give one track out and try to speak to that person rather than maybe blitz the whole train.

Because I want to use most of my tracks out in India.

And so I'm very conservative in Europe. And of course when I get to India, we change the strategy. You'll find this word boldness, you may not like it, but you'll find it coming up again and again and again in the book of Acts.

Are you filled with the Holy Spirit? That's the will of God. It's not necessarily a spectacular thing. It may be by crisis, it may be by process.

But we need to know by His grace we are filled with His Holy Spirit. We can't go out and do this work in our own strength. And this is what we need if we're going to do it.

The reality, the power, the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And I think of half the world waiting to hear the gospel for the first time. And then I get reports back from some of our countries on how few people are being reached for Christ.

I sometimes wonder, what in the world are we doing there? If we have a united spirit-filled effort in OM this year, I believe we could reach twice as many people for Christ in 1980 as we had last year. And I want to say to you leaders, I don't get to speak to you much, but if you don't do everything you can to reach men before it's too late in your lands, you are going to stand before Jesus Christ. Forget about me, that's no problem.

You will stand before Jesus Christ and give account for what you are doing in your countries. God has set before us an open door. Let us go forward in Book of Acts reality, and in Book of Acts power, and make use of every opportunity.

Of course, there's another thing that we see in the Book of Acts, and that's that the devil attacks. When there's a united effort for Christ, the enemy attacks. Right there in Chapter 5 we have Ananias, Ananias and Sapphira.

A story of deception. A story of hypocrisy. Where two people, as an example for us, were stricken dead.

And it's over possessions. Not because they didn't sell all their possessions. That's not the problem.

And this shows the priority. Our hearts. Because their sin was that they deceived, they lied, they gave a false impression, and therefore lied against the Holy Spirit.

Of course, there's another emphasis in Acts, and that's the emphasis on prison. The prison ministry. In Chapter 4 they were in prison.

In Chapter 5 they were in prison. Chapter 12 they were in prison. Chapter 16 they were in prison.

Not quite the Holiday-ian lifestyle this was. Some of our leading Christian men now, when they arrive in London, they book into the Hotel Hilton. \$100 a night.

Dr. Great Christian Group recently had a convention there. Hundreds of them, \$100 a night, there they are. They spend more in one night than we spend here, for everybody, in two weeks.

Well, these things personally confuse me. Because I know God still loves those people. And I know God uses them.

But I know He could use them so much more, if they had a little more of this. Maybe Paul had a line-up, man, I don't know. Go ahead to the next city.

Check out the jail, see, you know what the facilities are. Somehow, maybe I'm wrong, when I look at God's people in the Book of Acts, and then when I look at God's people today, somehow it seems we are moving in different directions. Of course, there are many other things emphasized in this book.

The miracles in answer to prayer. The people who are healed in answer to prayer. Somebody once said, O.M. doesn't believe in healing, does it? That doesn't make any sense.

The Germans especially have trouble with this doctrine. But I just want to tell you in O.M. we believe in healing. And what we don't believe in is a circus.

And sometimes what takes place in something that's supposed to be a meeting for Christian gospel, it is more like a circus than it is a spiritual meeting. I would like everyone this year to read Dr. Francis Schaeffer's wife's book, Edith Schaeffer's book on suffering, on affliction. And I hope that will be in every O.M. library worldwide.

And let us in O.M. in a loving and careful and compassionate way continue in prayer for the sick and for the physical healing of people as God enables and as we meet them. And let us realize that several decades of history or a hundred years of history also proves that God wonderfully uses doctors and that he has entrusted to doctors and Christian doctors skills that we are foolish not to make use of just as we use microphones and electricity and other things that they didn't have in the book of Acts. Then we see in the book of Acts this great emphasis on missionary work.

We see the emphasis on the local church as a church was born in Antioch in chapter 11. And then that church sent out workers and they started churches in other places. And what an exciting, fast-moving missionary book this is.

And we see God not only saving people but they come together in living fellowships. Not in church buildings. To me this was one of the greatest mistakes of history when the emphasis shifted from living fellowships of people meeting anywhere they could to building beautiful buildings that they thought would express the glory of God, the buildings.

Now these buildings are all over the place. And of course I believe there are many, many living, wonderful believers who meet in great buildings. And we are committed to working with the historic church.

I have a message here I won't be able to give you because I won't be speaking that much next week. It's called reasons why we are committed to working with the historic church. Ten reasons.

That's our commitment. But we know that in the book of Acts the church was in homes and the church spread. And many of the churches that we are involved in planting in India and other places they are in homes.

You can be sure that we in OM are not going to be involved in building any church buildings. In any case after we start a church we do not care for that church. We always do this in connection with other missionaries or other church leaders and then they have to battle on with their local leaders and set the course for that local fellowship.

Notice 13 verse 2. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work unto which I have called them. You can get a concordance and you can find many many other references for fasting. You may want to look at some of those references tomorrow.

Verse 3. And when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them they sent them away. Jesus said, After I leave then you shall fast. There's not time tonight to go into detail about this.

But prayer and fasting is a time to give ourselves in an extra way to God. Tomorrow a lot of the prayer you will be off on your own. Go off to a park or find a quiet place and pray and fast.

Some are eating, no problem. During meal times we will be praying together in this room. And we believe this is biblical and that it's going to help in our spiritual preparation and in knowing God's will for the coming weeks.

This kind of work that we are doing even financially it cost 5 to 10 times as much as it did 15 years ago. Yet the amount of support we ask people to trust God for has maybe only increased 2 or 3 times in the past years. And so this means generally as a body we have to trust God for a miracle if we are going to go into another year.

We've had phone calls today. Bangladesh. That wasn't today, that was some days ago.

London. Other places. They are needing the finance to get on with the work.

And there has been very little. The fuel for the ship is not paid for. We have even discussed today the possibility of the ship having to remain in Brazil.

But it isn't really the ship, it's 300 people whose ministry is involved on that ship. And I believe through prayer and fasting we can see a breakthrough in this area of finance. They were in a spiritual warfare in the book of Acts.

You can study more on your own tomorrow. May this emphasis be our emphasis. May this vision be our vision.

It's not going to happen overnight. There will be many battles. But it can happen.

Some of us who are here, we have been seeing it 10, 15, 20 years. We know God works the same way today as he worked 2,000 years ago. Hebrews says Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forevermore.

Let's believe it. Let's keep it in balance as we have talked about already a lot. Let's believe it.

Let us pray. Oh Father, we praise you for this book. We thank you for these examples.

This book of Acts' reality. We thank you that this can flow through our spiritual life. Lord, in ourselves we feel weak.

We feel inadequate. We sense our inconsistencies. We fall at your feet.

And we ask, oh Lord, that we may know a greater crucifixion of our own will and our own flesh. As we move forward in this great worldwide spiritual invasion. For we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21448.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/george-verwer/reality-in-the-book-of-acts-eng-to-german/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net