



Team Ministry in the International Church as seen in the Book of Acts

Mark Blair, BICF ZGC, October 2012

Team ministry is seen throughout the Bible, from Noah's boys who helped Dad craft the Ark, to the armies of heaven who witness the final victory of Christ our Captain. Moses follows wise advice and creates a leadership team for dispensing judgment. The constant worship of God is overseen by a large team of Aaronic priests. And the team of prophets even had their own 'school.' Our Lord Himself had three, and twelve, and seventy that played key roles in His earthly ministry.

The International Church of the Risen Jesus commences in Acts. God has had a people for His Name since Eden onward. But Pentecost unveils the global nature of God's people. The mission to forge those from every tongue, tribe, and nation into one family of faith in Jesus begins in Acts. *"They are called Christians first"* in the cosmopolitan city of Antioch, the launching site of world outreach. And, as we see in all of Scripture, team ministry is also a key component throughout the book of Acts. Let us consider some lessons about Team Ministry in the International Church from the message of Acts under two main headings....

1. Message we can Trust

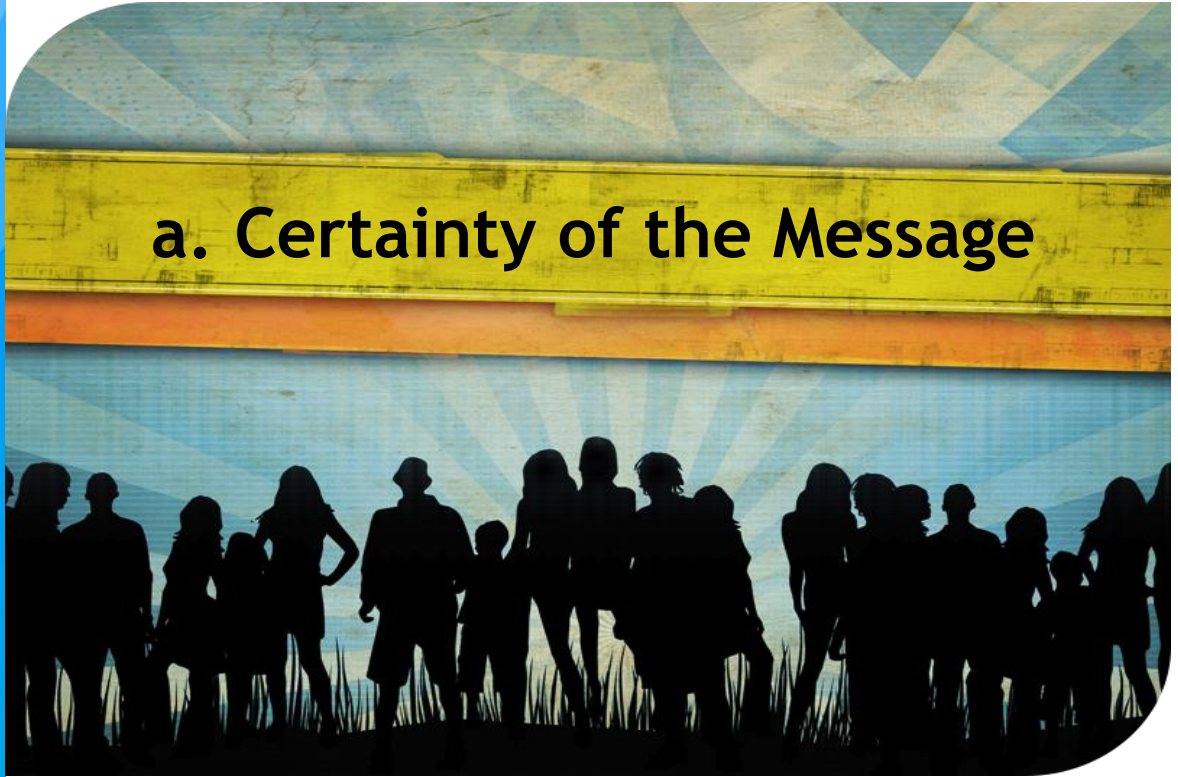
- a. Certainty of the Message**
- b. Clarity of the Meaning**
- c. Church-growing Ministry**

2. Model we can Follow

- a. Community of the Messiah**
- b. Courage in Mission**
- c. Correction of our Mistakes**
- d. Comfort in our Misery**

1. Message we can Trust

a. Certainty of the Message



1.2 he had given commands through the Holy Spirit *to the apostles* whom he had chosen

1.9-11 And when he had said these things, as *they were looking on*, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “*Men of Galilee*, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

1.21,22 So one of the *men who have accompanied us during all the time* that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of *these men must become with us a witness* to his resurrection.”

2.14 Peter, *standing with the eleven*, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea...

2.32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that *we all are witnesses*.

4.13 Now when they saw the *boldness of Peter and John*, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that *they had been with Jesus*.

4.33 And with great power *the apostles were giving their testimony* to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

6.7 And the *word of God continued to increase*, and the number of the *disciples multiplied* greatly in Jerusalem, and a *great many of the priests* became obedient to the faith.

10.39 And *we are witnesses of all that he did* both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.

10.42 And *he commanded us to preach* to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.

13.2,3 While *they were worshiping* the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying *they laid their hands on them and sent them off*.

15.32 And *Judas and Silas*, who were themselves prophets, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with many words.

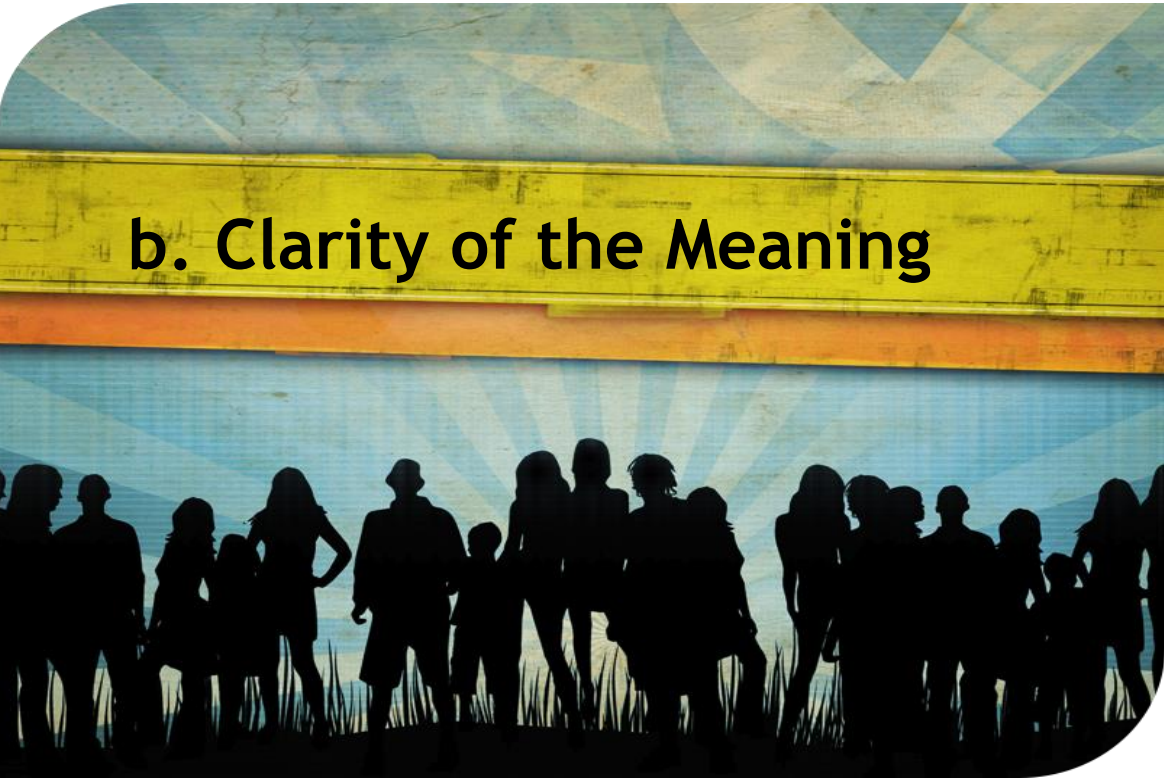
21.17 When *we* had come to Jerusalem, *the brothers* received us gladly.

28.30,31 He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and *welcomed all* who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

Applications:

1. Message we can Trust

b. Clarity of the Meaning



2.17,18 ““And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out *my Spirit on all flesh*, and your *sons and your daughters* shall prophesy, and your *young men* shall see visions, and your *old men* shall dream dreams; even on my *male servants and female servants* in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and *they shall prophesy*.”

2.42 And they devoted themselves *to the apostles' teaching*

5.29 But *Peter and the apostles* answered, “We must obey God rather than men.

6.4 But *we will devote ourselves* to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

11.26 For a whole year they met with *the church* and taught a *great many people*. And in Antioch the disciples were first called *Christians*.

13.1 Now there were in the church at Antioch *prophets and teachers*, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.tetrarch, and Saul.

15.6,22,25,28 The *apostles and the elders* were gathered together to consider this matter... Then it seemed good to the *apostles and the elders*, with the *whole church*...it has seemed good to us, having come to *one accord*, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul...For it has seemed good to *the Holy Spirit and to us*

15.35 But *Paul and Barnabas* remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with *many others also*.

16.4,5 As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the *decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders* who were in Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.

18.24-26 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when *Priscilla and Aquila* heard him, they took him and *explained to him the way of God more accurately*.

21.8-10 we entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was *one of the seven*, and stayed with him. He had four unmarried *daughters, who prophesied*. While we were staying for many days, *a prophet named Agabus* came down from Judea.

21.18-20 On the following day *Paul* went in with *us* to *James*, and *all the elders* were present. After greeting them, he related one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified God.

Applications:

1. Message we can Trust

c. Church-growing Ministry



2.47 praising God and having *favor with all the people*. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

5.42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, *they* did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

8.25 Now when *they had testified* and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, *preaching the gospel to many villages* of the Samaritans.

9.27 But Barnabas took him and *brought him to the apostles* and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord

12. 25 And *Barnabas and Saul* returned from Jerusalem when *they had completed their service*, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.

13.5 When they arrived at Salamis, *they proclaimed the word of God* in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.

13.43 ...many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed *Paul and Barnabas*, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

14.26,27 and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled. And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

16.3 Paul wanted *Timothy* to accompany him, and he took him...

16.9,10 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately *we sought to go* on into Macedonia, concluding that *God had called us* to preach the gospel to them.

17.14,15 Then *the brothers* immediately sent Paul off on his way to the sea, but *Silas and Timothy remained* there. *Those who conducted Paul* brought him as far as Athens, and after receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed.

18.1-4 After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named *Aquila*, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife *Priscilla*, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade *he stayed with them and worked*, for they were tentmakers by trade. And he *reasoned in the synagogue* every Sabbath...

18.5 When *Silas and Timothy arrived* from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word,

18.22,23 When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted *the church*, and then went down to Antioch. After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, *strengthening all the disciples*.

28.14,15 And so *we came to Rome*. And the *brothers there*, when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On *seeing them*, Paul thanked God and took courage...

Applications:

2. Model we can Follow



a. Community of the Messiah

1.14 *All these with one accord* were devoting themselves to prayer, *together with the women* and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

3:1 Now *Peter and John* were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer

4.32 Now the *full number of those who believed* were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.

5.12 Now many *signs and wonders* were regularly done *among the people by the hands of the apostles*. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico.

6.6 These they *set before the apostles*, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

9.17 So *Ananias*...laying his hands on him he said, “*Brother Saul*...

10.23 So he invited them in to be his guests. The next day he rose and went away with them, and *some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him*.

14.23 And when they had appointed *elders for them in every church*, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

16.32-34 And *they spoke the word* of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and *all his family*. Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

17.34 But *some men joined him and believed*, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

18.6-8 ...From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” And he left there and went to *the house of a man named Titius Justus*, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue. Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with *his entire household*. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.

Applications:



b. Courage in Mission

1.8 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.

3.11 While *he clung to Peter and John*, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them

4.1 And as *they* were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them

5.28 saying, “We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here *you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching*, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us.”

8.4 Now *those who were scattered* went about *preaching* the word.

9.24,25 their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him, but *his disciples took him* by night and let him down through an opening in the wall

11.19 Now *those who were scattered* because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, *speaking the word...*

13.50-52 ...the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. But *they shook off* the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. And *the disciples* were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

14.6,7 they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, and there *they continued to preach the gospel*.

20:1 After the uproar ceased, *Paul sent for the disciples*, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia.

Applications:

2. Model we can Follow



c. Correction of our Mistakes

4.34,35 ...brought the proceeds of what was sold and *laid it at the apostles' feet*, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

5.2 he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and *laid it at the apostles' feet*.

5.11 And great fear came *upon the whole church* and upon all who heard of these things.

6.2,3 And *the twelve* summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that *we* should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you *seven men of good repute*, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

11.12 And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These *six brothers also accompanied me*, and we entered the man's house.

11.29,30 So *the disciples determined*, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers And they did so, sending it *to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul*.

13.13 Now *Paul and his companions* set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And *John left them* and returned to Jerusalem,

20.17,28 Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called *the elders of the church* to come to him...Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you *overseers*, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

Applications:



d. Comfort in our Misery

4.23,24 When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, *they lifted their voices together* to God

5.18 they arrested *the apostles* and put them in the public prison.

8.2,3 *Devout men* buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off *men and women* and committed them to prison.

9.39 *All the widows* stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them.

12.1 About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on *some who belonged to the church*

12.12 When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where *many were gathered together* and were praying.

16.35-40 But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, “Let *those men* go.” And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, “The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore, come out now and go in peace.” But Paul said to them, “They have beaten *us* publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown *us* into prison; and do they now throw *us* out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take *us* out.” The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that *they* were Roman citizens. So they came and apologized to *them*. And they took them out and asked *them* to leave the city. So *they* went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when *they* had seen *the brothers*, they encouraged them and departed.

20.37,38 And there was much weeping on the part of *all*; *they* embraced Paul and kissed him, being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And *they accompanied him* to the ship.

21.4,5 And having sought out *the disciples*, we stayed there for seven days. And through the Spirit *they were telling Paul* not to go on to Jerusalem. When our days there were ended, *we departed* and went on our journey, and *they all, with wives and children*, accompanied us until we were outside the city. And kneeling down on the beach, *we prayed*.

Applications: