

8. God's Church Receiving

“When the day of Pentecost had arrived, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like that of a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were staying. And tongues, like flames of fire that were divided, appeared to them and rested on each one of them. Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages, as the Spirit gave them ability for speech” (Acts 2:1-4, HCSB).

- The church is to continue the mission of Jesus through the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit.

9. God's Church Radiating

“This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed in all the world as a testimony to all nations. And then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14, HCSB).

- Each church should gather worshipers from the peoples of the world as if it were gathering treasure to present to its beloved King.
- The Great Commission is given to every follower of Jesus, not just to pastors or missionaries or full-time Christian workers.
- Every true believer is both a worshiper and a witness.

10. God's Redeemed Responding

“All the nations You have made will come and bow down before You, Lord, and will honor your name. For You are great and perform wonders; You alone are God” (Ps. 86:9-10, HCSB).

“After this I looked, and there was a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were robed in white with palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb’” (Rev. 7:9-10, HCSB)!

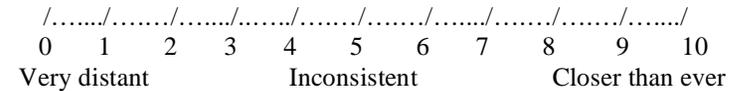
- The church's mission is a time-limited assignment. The work of salvation is complete, but the work of proclamation remains.
- As Jesus did, we should go from the very presence of God to reclaim lost people.

What on Earth is God Doing?

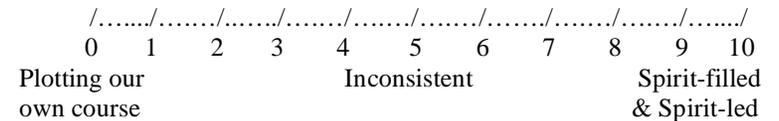
Part 1 of 6 in the series “The Acts 1:8 Challenge”

A quick self-assessment:

On a scale from 1 to 10, how close is your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ right now?



On a scale from 1 to 10, how responsive is our church to the leadership of the Holy Spirit?



Because Jesus is alive . . .

• I have a new identity.

“I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me. So I live my life in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20, NLT).

• I have a new citizenship.

“But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior. He will take these weak mortal bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same mighty power that he will use to conquer everything, everywhere” (Phil. 3:20-21, NLT).

“Dear Theophilus: In my first book I told you about everything Jesus began to do and teach until the day he ascended to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions from the Holy Spirit. During the forty days after his crucifixion, he appeared to the apostles from time to time and proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. On these occasions he talked to them about the Kingdom of God” (Acts 1:1-3, NLT).

- **I have a new perspective.**

“In one of these meetings as he was eating a meal with them, he told them, ‘Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you what he promised. Remember, I have told you about this before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ When the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, ‘Lord, are you going to free Israel now and restore our kingdom?’ ‘The Father sets those dates,’ he replied, ‘and they are not for you to know. But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth’” (Acts 1:4-8, NLT).

God’s eternal perspective:

1. God’s Glory Radiating

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims the work of His hands. Day after day they pour out speech; night after night they communicate knowledge” (Ps. 19:1-2, HCSB).

“I have glorified You on the earth by completing the work You gave me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me in Your presence with that glory I had with You before the world existed” (John 17:4-5, HCSB).

- God’s glory in eternity gives context and meaning to everything else.

2. God’s Creation Reflecting

“When I observe Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You set in place, what is man that You remember him, the son of man that You look after him? You made him little less than God and crowned him with glory and honor” (Ps. 8:3-5, HCSB).

- People choose whether to return God’s glory, and every person is valuable to God as a potential worshiper.

3. God’s People Rebelling

“When the Lord saw that man’s wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every scheme his mind thought of was nothing but evil all the time, the Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart” (Gen. 6:5-6, HCSB).

- The greatest tragedy of sin is that it separates God from His reflected glory in His people.

4. God’s Love Reaching

“The Lord said to Abram: ‘Go out from your land, your relatives, and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, I will curse those who treat you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you’” (Gen. 12:1-3, HCSB).

- God chose Abram not because Abram was special, but because God is special. God acted in love and Abraham responded in faith.

5. God’s Nation Revealing

“He said to me, ‘You are My servant, Israel; I will be glorified in him’” (Isa. 49:3, HCSB).

- God’s people as a group are to both reflect His glory and proclaim His glory to others.

6. God’s Nation Resisting

“I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered among the countries. I judged them according to their conduct and actions. When they came to the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name, because it was said about them: These are the people of the Lord, yet they had to leave His land [in exile]. Then I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they went” (Ezek. 36:19-21, HCSB).

- God’s ultimate purpose for Israel was to bring the world a Savior.

7. God’s Son Restoring

“Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways. In these last days, He has spoken to us by [His] Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things and through whom He made the universe. He is the radiance of His glory, the exact expression of His nature, and He sustains all things by His powerful word. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:1-3, HCSB).

- The center of history, and of God’s redemptive plan, is Jesus. Jesus came not to reform, but to redeem.

- Jesus shows us what God’s glory in us was supposed to look like.