

- I. Even as the Divine Trinity is the framework of the entire New Testament, so the Divine Trinity is the structure of the book of Acts; chapter after chapter of Acts unveils the operation of the Divine Trinity for the carrying out of God's New Testament economy**—e.g., Acts 1:1-2, 4-5, 8, 11, 21; 2:4, 17-18, 21-24, 27, 31-33, 36, 38; 13:2, 4, 7, 9-10, 12, 16, 23, 30, 33-39, 49-50, 52; 28:15, 23, 25, 31:
- A. **The Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—was fully involved with the Son's ascension and the pouring out of the Spirit—Acts 2:32-36:**
 - The Son ascended, the Father exalted Him, and the Spirit was poured out—Luke 24:51; Phil. 2:9; Acts 1:9-11; 2:32-36.
 - The Father, the Son, and the Spirit were all wrapped up with the outpouring of the Spirit as the consummation of the processed Triune God—Acts 2:33; John 7:37-39; Phil. 1:19.
 - B. **In Acts 16:6-7 the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Jesus are used interchangeably, revealing that the Spirit of Jesus is the Holy Spirit:**
 - *The Holy Spirit* is a general title of the Spirit of God in the New Testament—Acts 9:17, 31.
 - As a vessel containing the Triune God, Paul was fully constituted of the Holy Spirit and of the Spirit of Jesus—Eph. 3:14-17; Luke 1:35; Acts 2:32-36; Phil. 1:19.
 - The kind of work that we do for the Lord depends on the kind of Spirit by whom we are guided, directed, instructed, and constituted; when the all-inclusive Spirit becomes our constitution, our work will be the expression of this Spirit—Acts 16:6-7; Rom. 8:9; Phil. 1:19.
 - C. **God obtained the church "through His own blood"—Acts 20:28:**
 - God purchased the church by paying the price of "His own blood."
 - Through incarnation our God, the Creator, the eternal One, became mingled with man—John 1:1, 14:
 - As a result, He was no longer only God—He became a God-man, who had blood and was able to die for us—1 John 1:7.
 - When the Lord Jesus, the God-man, died on the cross, He died not only as man but also as God.
 - The blood that He shed was not only the blood of the man Jesus but also the blood of the God-man.
 - Therefore, His blood, through which God obtained the church, is "His own blood"—Acts 20:28.
- II. The Spirit of Jesus is a particular expression concerning the Spirit of God and refers to the Spirit of the incarnated Savior who, as Jesus in His humanity, passed through human living and death on the cross—Acts 16:7:**
- A. **In the Spirit of Jesus there is not only the divine element of God but also the human element of Jesus and the elements of His human living and His suffering of death as well—Acts 1:3.**
 - B. **The Spirit of Jesus is not only the Spirit of God with divinity in Him so that we may live the divine life but also the Spirit of the man Jesus with humanity in Him so that we may live a proper human life and endure its sufferings—Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 1:5:**
 - In his suffering Paul needed the Spirit of Jesus because in the Spirit of Jesus there is the suffering element and the suffering strength to withstand persecution—Col. 1:24; Acts 9:15-16; 16:7.
 - In our preaching of the gospel today, we also need the Spirit of Jesus to face the opposition and persecution.
 - C. **The Spirit of Jesus involves more than the Holy Spirit—Acts 16:6-7:**
 - The Holy Spirit involves only the incarnation and birth of the Lord Jesus—Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:18, 20.
 - The Spirit of Jesus involves His humanity, human living, all-inclusive death, life-imparting resurrection, and ascension—Acts 1:1-3, 8; 2:23, 32, 36.
 - D. **Just as the Spirit of Christ is the reality of Christ, so the Spirit of Jesus is the reality of Jesus—Rom. 8:9; Acts 16:7:**
 - If we do not have the Spirit of Jesus, Jesus will not be real to us.
 - Jesus is real to us because we have the Spirit of Jesus as the reality, the realization, of Jesus—Acts 16:7.

III. **The kingdom of God is the main subject of the apostles' preaching in Acts**—Acts 1:3; 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31:

- A. The fact that the resurrected Christ, in His appearing to the apostles through a period of forty days, spoke to them “the things concerning the kingdom of God” indicates that the kingdom would be the main subject of the apostles’ preaching in their coming commission after Pentecost—Acts 1:3.
- B. According to the New Testament, the kingdom of God is not a visible, material realm; actually, the kingdom of God is a person, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself—Luke 17:20-21.
- C. The churches and the kingdom of God go together; the churches produced by the propagation of the resurrected Christ are the kingdom of God on earth today—Acts 14:22; 20:25:
- The resurrected Christ, who is propagating Himself in His ascension, by the Spirit, and through the disciples, is the reality of the kingdom of God; the kingdom of God is His expansion—Acts 1:8; 8:12:
 - The churches are the expansion of Christ, who came to sow Himself as the seed of the kingdom of God; this is revealed in the Gospels—Mark 4:3, 26.
 - In the Gospels Christ was the seed of the kingdom; in the book of Acts we have the propagation of this seed to produce the churches as the kingdom of God—Acts 8:1, 12; 13:1-4.
 - We in the churches are the propagation of Christ and the expansion of Christ, and we are enlarging the kingdom of God—Rev. 1:9, 11.
- D. The kingdom of God is the spreading of Christ as life into His believers to form a realm in which God rules in His life—2 Pet. 1:3-11:
- To enter into this kingdom, people need to repent of their sins and believe in the gospel so that their sins maybe forgiven and so that they may be regenerated by God to have the divine life, which matches the divine nature of this kingdom—Mark 1:15; John 3:3, 5.
 - All the believers in Christ can share the kingdom in the church age for their enjoyment of God in His righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit—Rom. 14:17.
 - The kingdom of God will become the kingdom of Christ and of God for the overcoming believers to inherit and enjoy in the coming kingdom age so that they may reign with Christ for a thousand years—1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 20:4, 6.
 - As the eternal kingdom, the kingdom of God will be an eternal blessing of God’s eternal life for all of God’s redeemed to enjoy in the new heaven and new earth for eternity—Rev. 21:1-4; 22:1-5, 14, 17.
- E. In Acts 14:22 Paul entreated the believers who were continuing in the faith to realize that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God, because the whole world opposes our entering in; to enter into the kingdom of God is to enter into the full enjoyment of Christ as the kingdom.
- F. In Acts 19 we see that Satan is fighting against God’s spreading of His kingdom on earth; the prevailing ministry for the propagation of Christ is a fighting, a battle, for God’s kingdom—Acts 19:23-41.
- G. Paul’s proclaiming the kingdom of God in Acts 28:31 was the propagation of the resurrected Christ:
- This is proved by the words *teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ*, which things go together with the kingdom of God—Acts 28:23.
 - To teach concerning Christ is to spread the kingdom of God; therefore, the kingdom of God is actually the propagation of the resurrected Christ—a process that continues to be carried out through the believers today—Acts 28:31.

- I. **Even as the Divine Trinity is the framework of the entire New Testament, so the Divine Trinity is the structure of the book of Acts; chapter after chapter of Acts unveils the operation of the Divine Trinity for the carrying out of God's New Testament economy**
 - The Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—was fully involved with the Son's ascension and the pouring out of the Spirit as the consummation of the processed Triune God. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God in the New Testament. In Acts 16 the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Jesus are used interchangeably. The kind of work that we do for the Lord depends on the kind of Spirit by whom we are guided, directed, instructed, and constituted; when the all-inclusive Spirit becomes our constitution, our work will be the expression of this. As a vessel containing the Triune God, Paul was fully constituted of the Holy Spirit and of the Spirit of Jesus. Through incarnation our God, the Creator, the eternal One, became mingled with man to become a God-man, who had blood and was able to die for us with this God-man blood. Hence, God purchased the church by paying the price through "His own blood." [Acts 2:32-33] *This Jesus God has raised up, ... having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this... [Acts 16:6-7] And they passed through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. [Acts 20:28] Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.*
- II. **The Spirit of Jesus is a particular expression concerning the Spirit of God and refers to the Spirit of the incarnated Savior who, as Jesus in His humanity, passed through human living and death on the cross**
 - The Spirit of Jesus has the divine element of God as well as the human element of Jesus, His human living and His suffering of death. Hence, the Spirit of Jesus enables us to live the divine life and a proper human life that endures its sufferings. Like Paul in his suffering, we need the Spirit of Jesus with its suffering element and strength to endure these sufferings, we also need the Spirit of Jesus to face the opposition and persecution in our preaching of the gospel today. The Holy Spirit involves only the incarnation and birth of the Lord Jesus whereas the Spirit of Jesus involves His humanity, human living, all-inclusive death, life-imparting resurrection, and ascension. Unless we have the Spirit of Jesus, the reality and realization of Jesus, Jesus will not be real to us. [Col. 1:24] *I now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body, which is the church; [Rom. 8:9] ...Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him. [Phil. 1:19-20] ...This will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope that... Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.*
- III. **The kingdom of God is the main subject of the apostles' preaching in Acts**
 - The resurrected Christ appeared and spoke to the apostles through a period of forty days concerning the kingdom of God. This indicates that the kingdom would be the main subject of the apostles' preaching in their coming commission after Pentecost. The kingdom of God is not a visible, material realm; it is a person, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The resurrected Christ is propagating Himself in His ascension, by the Spirit, and through the disciples, He came to sow Himself as the seed of the kingdom to produce the churches as the reality of the kingdom of God on earth today. We in the churches are the propagation and the expansion of Christ, and we are enlarging the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is the spreading of Christ as life into His believers to form a realm in which God rules in His life. People need to repent to be forgiven of their sins and believe in the gospel, that they may be regenerated by God to have the divine life, matching the divine nature of this kingdom. All the believers in Christ can share the kingdom in the church age for their enjoyment of God in His righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God will become the kingdom of Christ for the overcoming believers to inherit and enjoy in the coming kingdom age so that they may reign with Christ for a thousand years. It will be an eternal blessing of God's eternal life for all of God's redeemed to enjoy in the new heaven and new earth for eternity. In Acts 14 Paul entreated the believers who were continuing in the faith to endure many tribulations and enter into the kingdom of God for the full enjoyment of Christ as the kingdom. The whole world opposes our entering into the kingdom and Satan is fighting against God's spreading of His kingdom on earth. The prevailing ministry for the propagation of Christ is a fighting, a battle, for God's kingdom. The kingdom of God is actually the propagation of the resurrected Christ by teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, which things go together with the kingdom of God. It is a process that continues to be carried out through the believers today to proclaim the kingdom of God. [Luke 17:20-21] *...He answered them and said, The kingdom of God does not come with observation;...For behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you. [Rom. 14:17] For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. [Acts 14:22] Establishing the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith and saying that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. [Acts 28:31] Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.*

If you read Acts 16, you will see that the Spirit of Jesus is related mainly to the preaching of the gospel.

To preach the gospel we need the Spirit of Jesus. The Spirit of Jesus does not strive, and it has no rivalry or enmity. When Jesus, the Nazarene, was on earth, He did not have any envy, strife, or rivalry. How can we have one spirit and one soul? This is not possible by our spirit, for our spirit is a spirit of envy. When we see others taking the lead, we are envious. Then we begin to strive in the spirit of rivalry. Although our spirit is like this, the Spirit of Jesus is not. Consider the life of Jesus as presented in the Gospels. His life was a life without envy, strife, or rivalry. To be one in spirit and in soul is possible only in the Spirit of Jesus.

To be one soul mainly means to be one mind. The reason Christians cannot be one soul is that each desires to be first and that no one is willing to be last. But it is possible for us to be one soul by the Spirit of Jesus. When we are all in the Spirit of Jesus and are in one soul, we shall strive together.

<Excerpts from "The Experience of Christ", Chapter 2, "The Way To Experience Christ">

The churches produced by Christ's propagation are the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is a sphere of life produced by the propagation of Christ. Actually the kingdom is the expansion of this resurrected, propagating One. The resurrected Christ, who is propagating Himself in His ascension, by the Spirit, and through the disciples, is the reality of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is His expansion.

Can you say how many chapters are in the book of Acts? Perhaps you would say that Acts has twenty-eight chapters. This, of course, is correct. However, it is also true to say that the book of Acts is still being written because the propagation of the resurrected Christ is still taking place. By now Acts may have thousands of chapters. Even today a portion of a chapter may have been written. This writing is the propagation of the resurrected Christ, and this propagation is the expansion of Christ to be the kingdom of God. We in the churches are the propagation of Christ and the expansion of Christ, and we are enlarging the kingdom of God.

<Excerpts from "Life-study of Acts", Message 2, "The Subject Of The Book">