

Acts Chapter 1 v 1 - 14

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Date: 17 May 2015

Preacher: Peter Robinson

- [0 : 00] Oh, my God.
 Oh, my God.
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 Oh, my God. Oh, my God.
- [2 : 34] Oh, my God. Oh, my God.
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 Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God.
 Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God.
- [4 : 42] Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God.
 Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, it's a great place.
 Oh, my God. Oh, my God. And your mercy follows me Your goodness will lead me home
 He acts my race in righteousness And he adjoins my head with heart And my cup is over
 and was with joy And he saw his pure delight And I will trust in you And I will trust in you
 For your endless mercy
 Follows me Your goodness will lead me home And though I walk the darkest night I will
 not fear the evil world For you are with me And your heart and son And the comfort I need
 to know And I will trust in you And I will trust in you And I will trust in you And I will trust in
 you And your endless mercy Follows me Your goodness will lead me home And I will trust
 in you
 And I will trust in you And I will trust in you And if you'd like to turn to Acts and chapter 1
 That will be helpful as we consider Just a part of this passage, part of this chapter And
 think about what it means to us today Whenever you watch a movie, a film on the telly or
 at the pictures Inevitably at the end there will be that long list of credits Which will roll up
 from the bottom of the screen First of all, of course, the actors The principal actors And
 then the secondary actors And all the way down to the person who is tying his shoe at the
 lamppost Or something like that will be there And then after those actors You have a
 whole host of others Which can go on, of course, for a very, very, very long time And by
 that time, usually the theatre is emptied And the people have gone But you have those
 people who have made a contribution to the film
- [8 : 14] Which, though they weren't seen on the screen It was invaluable to the whole movie Now
 some of these men and women have job descriptions we're familiar with Caterers and
 sound engineers and so on But some of those backroom boys and girls have these
 obscure titles Like the Dolly Grip And the Key Grip And the Best Boy Whenever I see that,
 I always chuckle to myself Thinking, well, was he the son of the director who was there?

And he really behaved himself So he's called the best boy Like you did at school, didn't you? That you're the best girl for today And you're the best boy for today No, it's not like that But I can't tell you what he did or what he does But one of the jobs that has a very big effect upon the finished movie Is the continuity supervisor Or the continuity advisor Their job is to ensure that every scene follows accurately the one before As I'm sure you're aware When they're shooting a particular action scene Or whatever it may be There's several angles And it's done on several occasions They've got to make sure That everyone's wearing the right clothes That they were wearing in the previous scene to the next That they're standing in the same place they were in before And so on So that there's a smooth and seamless picture that takes place When the continuity supervisor doesn't get it right Then it can lead to some very embarrassing mistakes And you can find all sorts of film mistakes Where things haven't gone wrong If you watch a film yourself Often you can pick it up quite easily

There's a mistake One of the most famous ones was James Bond In *Diamonds Are Forever* Where he's being chased by the police And he goes down an alley And he puts the car onto two wheels He puts them onto the right hand side of the two wheels And he drives down this thin, thin alley Not that thin obviously But it's not very thick When he comes out the other side His wheels are the other way up And he made a bit of a boo-boo in that one But What's this about?

One of the proofs that the Bible Is really God's word And totally reliable And authoritative Is its continuity never fails What do I mean by that?

I mean that throughout the story of the scriptures Which spans several thousand years Every scene as it were Follows the one before There's a smoothness about it There's a continuity about the whole unfolding story Of God's dealings with his people We find that within individual books Whether it be the large historical books of kings Or Genesis and so on But we also find it within the whole of the 66 books From Genesis right to Revelation There are these wonderful continuity that exists And the reason of course it exists Is because the author is God The person doing the work As it were that we read about Is God And he is unchanging in his person and nature He is continuous If I can put it that way He is faithfully Unchangeably the same He's the director over all the events That unfold throughout the Bible And throughout history And so each

[11 : 29] So everywhere we find his hallmarks His fingerprints His directorial style as it were Very similar in the art world If you go into a gallery And you see a piece of art If you know a few artists And you'll see that A particular artist Has certain common characteristics In all of his paintings Or all of his sculptures So Monet has that sort of impressionist feel You may not have seen every Monet picture When you see a Monet picture You know that's a Monet Or Picasso People's heads all over the place And their body parts like this And so on They all have a unique way of painting Each piece sharing several common marks And so too with God Every work of God shares common traits Common hallmarks of his craftsmanship Now it's this truth I want to pick up Particularly here In the words of the angels

As they speak to the disciples In Acts chapter 1 verse 11 See last Thursday We mentioned it very briefly this morning Was Ascension Day Thursday just gone The day that In the church calendar When we remember that The Lord Jesus Christ Ascended back to the Father's right hand And to be seated in glory It's one of those events That has slipped out of Many Christians' radar Sadly we seem to spend more time Thinking about things Which are man-made inventions Like Ash Wednesday Shrove Tuesday And Lent None of those things are in the Bible But they're things that have Caught people's thoughts And Ascension is missing I'm not having a go about those things But I'm just saying that It's vitally important That we remember This truth That our Lord Jesus Christ Has ascended Into heaven His We remember his birth We remember his death His resurrection Remember Pentecost God willing We will be Next weekend It's important that we're mindful

As well Of his ascension It comes again and again In the scriptures Just this morning Roger preached from Luke 24 And in that reading He read to us How Jesus While he was blessing The disciples Left them Was taken up Into heaven Here we have it In Acts chapter 1 We've already read it In verse 2 The day he was taken up Into heaven And here in verse 10 As well In chapter 2 Verse 33 As Peter's preaching To the people He said Of Jesus God has raised this Jesus To life We're all his witnesses Of the fact He's exalted To the right hand Of God And then As Peter writes His first letter 1 Peter In chapter 3 Verse 22 He again Reminds his readers Of this reality 1 Peter Chapter 3 Verse 22 Jesus Christ Who has gone Into heaven

And is at God's right hand And we could find Other places as well Where this is brought up So it's something important It's something that The writers And the preachers Of the New Testament Wanted to Remind people about And we need to be mindful Of the ascension of Christ Well let's go back To these angels Here they are In verse 11 We read from verse 10 There are the disciples They were looking intently Up into the sky As Jesus was going When suddenly Two men dressed in white Stood beside them Men of Galilee They said Why do you stand here Looking into the sky The same Jesus Who has been Taken from you Into heaven Will come back In the same way You've seen him Go into heaven Why are they there If you ask the question It's always good To ask questions When you read the Bible Ask questions Why are these angels here They weren't there A minute ago They weren't there When Jesus was talking About them Jesus didn't mention An angel was coming Or some angels Were coming What's the point Of them appearing Just for these

Matter of seconds Speaking a sentence Or two And then disappearing again What's it all about Why are they there Well we know of course That an angel Is a messenger Really that's The word angel It means messenger And an angel Is always God's messenger They have an announcement A message From God Sometimes The angel Is sent by God To inform people Of what God's About to do To announce to them Something that's Going to happen We see that of course Particularly around The birth of the Lord Jesus Remember there in Luke Chapter 1 First of all An angel Went to Zachariah Who was going to be The father of John the Baptist And said to him Don't be afraid Zachariah Your prayer has been heard Your wife Elizabeth Will bear you A son You'll give him The name John He's announcing And telling him What's going to happen He does of course The same An angel

[16 : 31] When he goes To speak to Mary There in Chapter 1 And verse 30 The angel said to her Do not be afraid Mary You have found Faith with God You will be with child And give birth to a son You'll give him The name Jesus So announcing And again of course To the shepherds Out in the field The angel comes Why does he come I bring you good news I bring you good news Of great joy That will be for all The people today In the town of David A saviour has been born to you So there's an announcement But then there are other times When an angel is sent by God To give an explanation To explain what God is doing Or God has done Or what God is about to do To explain it That's of course What happens Around the resurrection Of the Lord Jesus Again back in Luke In chapter 24 When the women were there On the day of the resurrection On Easter Sunday The women went didn't they

Just to prepare To prepare the body of Jesus They took spices And they went to the tomb They found the stone rolled away And the tomb empty And it says While they were wondering about this In other words They were quizzical They were puzzled What's happened What's going on Where is Jesus While they were wondering about this Suddenly two men in clothes Gleam like lightning Stood beside them And they said Why do you look for the living Among the dead He's not here He's risen They're explaining To the bewilderment And the puzzlement Of the women What's happened Jesus isn't there It's not that his body Has been robbed It's not anything wrong It's because he's risen Just as he promised Just as he said Well it's that second Sort of announcement That the angels bring To the disciples here At Jesus' ascension They're coming to explain To them What's going on They're coming to To help them To understand And grasp What is happening And what they're to do And you can understand Why they needed The angels Can't you You can understand Why they needed A message

To explain to them One minute They're standing there Listening to Jesus Jesus is talking to them About the Holy Spirit He's going to send The next minute Jesus levitates Before their eyes And goes up And disappears Into a cloud And you can You can sort of just Luke paints this Wonderful picture Doesn't he You can just imagine The sort of Twelve of these men Look at Have you ever Have you ever done that In the street It's fun isn't it If you stand in the street And look up like that People will come up And they go What's he looking at What's up there But no They're doing it Because they're bewildered They're puzzled He's there And he's gone You know There's a real sense I think Of humour in that That Luke is painting This picture Of these men Just bewildered Staring intently We're told Up into the sky With a sense of Well what are we Going to do now A sense of What's happening And isn't it wonderful Isn't it gracious Of our God That in that moment When the disciples are

What are we going to do now That he sends them A message He sends them The angels To give them Direction To give them Instruction As to What is happening And what is going on And that's wonderful Of our God He's a gracious God isn't he A compassionate And considerate God He deals with us As well In that way There are many times In our own lives Where we We're almost Stood open mouth Looking at what's Going on around About us Thinking What is going on Around about us Lord What is happening In my life Where What am I supposed To do Where am I going We can find ourselves Often as Christians In a state of Confusion And bewilderment Now God usually Doesn't send us An angel In fact He's more likely Not to send us An angel But He will explain To us the way If we wait upon him If we look to him Then he will show us The way He'll make it plain He does it simply As we pray And wait upon him

In prayer And seek his face He does it as we Read the scriptures And the bible And God speaks to us In his word He does it As we're listening To the word Being preached He does it Through any other Method he chooses It may be a Christian friend It may even be A non-Christian It may be just Something that we're Reading in a book And God Through providence Directs and guides us And gives us Peace In the midst Of our confusion You see Because we have To walk by faith Doesn't mean That God will not Show us the way To go Walking by faith Means that we Trust him For each step It means we Trust him In the times When we don't Know what to do That he will Make his way Clear That he will Guide us And I know For many of us Here we've been In circumstances Like that Where we've just Been Well Lord What's going on Now What's happening Here And it may be For some time Later That we see The way And we understand

[21 : 35] What God has Done But are we Willing to hear Him is the Question Are we willing To take his Message Are we willing To listen To what he Has to say To us So what about These angels Then as they Speak to The disciples What explanation Do they give To the disciples What does their Heaven sent Message say To them And to us Who live in a World From which Christ Has gone It's interesting It's interesting When you compare Luke's account In Acts To Luke's Account In his own Gospel In the Gospel He says this While he was Blessing them He left Them It's important I think He left Them And we Know in one Sense Jesus Had left Them Before When of Course He was Crucified And died On the Cross But really For all That time He hadn't Left them They're Experiencing Something new A sense Of the Absence Of the Lord Jesus A sense Of Absence

Of his Presence Again That's Something Surely That we Know Ourselves And experience At times Where are You Lord Not only What's Going On But in One sense Joined With the What's Going On Is Where Are You Lord In All Of This Angels Initial Words To them Are Something Of a Rebuke I Think Men Of Galilee Why Do You Stand Here Looking Into The Sky It's A Rebuke Isn't It I Think It's A gentle Rebuke But Doing Standing Around Looking Into The Sky One Says The Disciples Being Told To Move Along To Get Going To Get On With Life To Do The Things That Jesus Has Already Told Them There To Do Look At Verse 8 What Did Jesus Say To Them In Verse 8 He Said You'll Receive Power When The Holy Spirit Comes On You You'll Be My Witnesses In Jerusalem Judah Samaria To The

Lord Jesus So The First Response In One Sense To The Ascension Is We're To Get On With The Work That Christ Has Commanded Us To Do We're Not Just To Stand Gawping Into The Sky We're Not Just To Stand Doing Nothing That's Really The Best Sort Of Advice In Those Times In Our Lives When We're Confused Or Bewildered Get On With Doing What We Know We Should Be Doing Rather Than Worrying About What We Think We Should Be Doing And Don't Know What We Should Be Doing Clear Isn't It Thank You Get On With It What Are You Doing Standing Around And We Can Be Like That We Can Be Like Rabbits Caught In The Headlights Can't We When Things Go Wrong When Things Are Trying When We Missing Out On The Lord's Presence We Can Run Around And Just What Am Doing Really We're To Get On With What Christ Has Told Us To Do And We Know What Jesus Wants Us To Do He Wants Us To Pray He Wants Us To Read The

Scriptures He Wants Us To Meet With God's People He Wants To Witness To Those In The World It's As Simple As That And Sometimes We Make It So Confusing For Ourselves In Thinking It Must Be Something Really Awesome It Must Things Are Difficult Not Standing Still Not Navel Gazing Or Sky Dazing Perhaps We're Waiting For An Angel To Come And Speak To Us Or God To Send Some Sort Of Lightning Bolt Into The Word Or From The Preaching Or Something Else Like That And We're Just Standing Waiting Now Let Me Assure You It's Good To Wait On The Lord But Waiting On The Lord Is Not An Inactivity It Is An Activity It's An Active Work Of Faith

It's Good To Wait On The Lord It's Good Not To Rush Into Something That Maybe A New Venture In Life A New Job Situation Or Whatever It May Be It's Good Not To Rush In Without Waiting And Seeking God In Prayer It's Always Right That We Do Seek His Will But It's It's Not Good That We're So Consumed With The Next Step The Next Career Move Or The Next House Move Or The Next Whatever It May Be That That's All Of Our Thoughts And We're Just Standing And We're Not Doing Everything Else It's More Often Than Not That As We Get On With The Basics Of The Christian Life As We Get On With The Things That Christ Has Revealed Are His Will For Us That He Reveals His Will To Us It's Often The Most Unexpected Ways Isn't It As We Just Get Back To And Get On With Things In Life And We Get On With Walking With Him Get On For Living With Him Then Suddenly We Find Yes There's The Door Open For Us Or

[26 : 38] There's The Way Ahead Or There's The Explanation The And Then Of Course They Have An Explanation Don't They An Explanation As To What's Happened This Same Jesus Who Has Been Taken From You Into Heaven He's In Heaven He's Ascended He's Gone Up And Back To The Place From Whence He Came He's Return To His Heavenly Father To The Glory That Was His Remember How Jesus Prayed In That Wonderful High Priestly Prayer We Call Of Me With The Glory I Had With You Before The World Was Made And Now He Was Returning To The Father He Completed That Ministry Which Required Him To Be On The Earth He Was Gone He Was Back In Heaven So

He Hasn't Just Sort Of Disappeared For A Moment And In One Sense I Suppose It May Well Be Of Course As The Disciples Are Standing There And Looking It Like When He Was Gone But He Will Be Back In A Bit No He Has Gone Back To Heaven That Angels Are Telling Them They Explain What Has Happened This Is A Final Thing In One Sense In His Earthly Ministry At This Stage There's A Purpose In Him Being Absent That's A Hard Thing For Us To Grasp Isn't It There's A Purpose For Him Being Absent Often Again As We Go Through The Christian Life There Are Those Times When The Lord Jesus Seems

Absent And We Can Look For All Sorts Of Reasons For It It's My Sinfulness It's My Lack Of Prayer It's Because I've Offended God Or Some Other Reason Perhaps As Well That We May Think Of Some Reason That The Enemy Wants To Tell Us Perhaps It's Because I Never Was A Christian Anyway In The First Place Or I Fallen Away From My Salvation Which Can't Ever Happen But We Think It May Happen To Us But Actually The Reason Is Reasonable If I Put it That Way The Reason That Jesus Was Absent From Them Now Was Because He Was Returning To Prepare A Place In Heaven For Them Wasn't He He Said That To Them In John Chapter 14 If I Go I'm Going To Prepare A Jesus Was Absent From Them For A Reason For Their Good For Their Blessing

For Their Help It Was Time Now As We've Seen Already That They Didn't Stand Still This Time They Got On With It Jesus Had Always Been There They Had Relied Upon Him Depended Upon Him They Made Complete Muck Ups Of Things At Times Had They And Jesus Had Been There To Sort Out The Problem There Was A Reason Why Jesus Left Them Though At The Time It Must Have Been Painful There's A Reason Why We Go Through Those Times In Our Lives Where The Lord Seems Absent From Us Yes It Could Be Because We Have Sinned It Could Be Because We Aren't Right With Him But It Could Also Be For Another Reason Reason Where God Is Perhaps Drawing Us To Himself More And Stir Up In Our Hearts A Greater Love For Himself A Greater Longing For Himself There

Can Be Any Number Of Reasons But Again In These Situations We Are To Know That The Lord Has A Reason For What He Does In His Dealings With Us This Same Jesus Has Been Taken Up From Heaven And There's Another Thing Here Isn't There That We See Not Only Is There A Rebuke We There's An Expectation This Same Jesus Who Has Been Taken From You Into Heaven Will Come Back In The Same Way You've Seen Him Go Into Heaven The Second Response In That Sense To The Ascension Of Jesus Is That We Are To Look Forward To With Expect And See His Second Coming He's Gone But He's Coming Back He's Gone And We're To Carry On And We're To Go On With The Work That God Has Given Us To Do But We're To Carry On With That Work Knowing Certainly

[31 : 40] And Looking Forward To Certainly His Return Once More There It Is Jesus Has Said It Again And Again That He Would Come The Son Of Man Will Be Seen In The Heavens And So On And So For And That's In One Sense Why I Talk About This Continuity Because Here It's Striking To Me Will Come Back In The Same Way You've Seen Him Go Into Heaven What Does It Mean By The Same Way Simply Put It Means That He Will Be Visibly Seen Just As He Was Visibly Seen Going He Will Be Visibly Seen Coming And Physically Just As He Physically Went Into Heaven So He So Physically Return From Heaven To Earth Visible And Physical Jehovah's Witnesses In About 1918 Or So Said Jesus Had Come Back Again But He Only Come Back In The Spiritual Realm Not Come Back Physically But That Goes Against It Doesn't It When

Jesus Comes Again And We Do Have Occasional Crackpots Around The World Who Say Things Jesus Come And This Is The Messiah And So Jesus Said Beware They Really Physically Be Here It Is Not Going To Be Some Apparition Or Some Dream Or Some Vision It Is Going To Be Real And Concrete The Ascension Of The Lord Jesus Christ Into Heaven Is The Guarantee That He's Coming From Heaven And Since He's Coming Again We Daren't Just Stand Around Twiddling Our Thumbs Until He Returns We Daren't Just Say Well He's Going And He's Coming Well There's Not Much We Can Do We'll Just Wait Around No We Can't We're Warned Again And Again Aren't We By The Lord Jesus About The Dangers Of Inactivity In Between His Going And His Coming That Parable Of The Talents Is Particularly Telling And Striking Isn't It Here's Luke's Account Of It

Jesus Said A Man Of Noble Birth Went To A Distant Country To Have Himself Appointed King And Then To Return So He Called His Servants And Gave Them Ten Miners Put This Money To Work He Said Until I Come Back And So The Parable Goes On Doesn't It About How Many Of Them Went To Work They Did The Things That The Master Wanted Them To Do They Used The Gifts The Talents The Miners That They Had To Produce Glory Blessing For Their Master And Then We're Told Another Servant Came And Said Sir Here Is Your Minor Here Is Your Talent I Kept It Laid Away In A Piece Of Cloth The Other One In Matthew Says I Dug A Hole And Buried It I Did Nothing I Did Nothing With It Did Nothing About It What Does The Lord Say His Master Replied I Will Judge You By Your Own Words You Wicked Servants We're

To Bear About The Master's Business I Believe That's What The Angels Are Saying To The Disciples They're Explaining To Them Why Jesus Has Left Them He's Gone To Heaven But They're Explaining To Them He's Coming Again So Get On With It Get On With The Ministry Get On With The Work You've Been Given To Do We Are To Be Concerned About Doing Christ's Revealed Will Today While We're Here So That When He Comes Again He Will He As He Certainly Will Do We Shall Not Hear The Words Of Rebuke But We Shall Hear The Words Well Done Good And Faithful Servant And It Seems To Me That's Exactly What We See Happening Once Those Angels Leave The Disciples That's Why I Read On To The Disciples Response To The Angels Explanation And The Angels Exhortation

And The Angels Rebuke Was This They Went On And Got On With The Work And The Greatest Work That They Could Do Was To Pray In Fact Again If You Compare That With Luke 24 We're Told They Worshipped Him Returned Jerusalem With Great Joy They Stayed Continually At The Temple Praising God They Knew They Had To Wait For The Spirit To Come At Pentecost But It Didn't Mean They Did Nothing They Prayed And They Praised They Got On With Their Relationship With God They Got On With Their Witness For Christ Surely Dear Friends That's Our Call That's That's The Message That We To Go On Serving Christ Serving Him With Whatever Gifts We Have Serving Him Waiting And Looking For That Day Carry On Where We Left Off We're Not Meant To Be Idle Every One Of Us Has A Work To Do As We Look Forward To That Day When Every Eye

[36 : 43] Will See Him And Every Knee Bough Before Him We Don't Need To Go Searching Out What Is It You Want Me To Do Lord Should I Be This Should I Be That Should I Be The Other We Get On With It Daily We Get On With It Prayerfully We Get On With It With That Willingness And That Desire Say Lord What Do You Want Me To Do Apart From These Things We Don't Need An Angel To Tell Us These Things For The Lord Has Revealed Them To Us Already In His Words Now Close With These Words Of Peter As He Himself Was Preaching And Speaking About The Return Of The Lord Jesus To Peter In Chapter 3 Verse 14 He Says This So Then Dear Friends Since You're Looking Forward To This Make Every Effort To Be Found Spotless Blameless And At Peace With Him Bear In Mind That Our

Lord's Patience Means Salvation There Are Those Yet To Be Saved There Are Those Who Are Yet To Come Into The Kingdom And God Has Called Us To Take His Message To Them Let's Stand And Sing Our Final Hymn Together It's Going To Come Up On The Screen Behind Me My Heart Is Filled With Thankfulness For Him Who Bore The Pain Can Hamm To Have To Have To Had The End

The End The End The End

The End Now may God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through.

May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

[41 : 21] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Amen.