

**Topic:** God's GPS (Global Positioning System)

**Thesis:** "The book of Acts reveals God's plan for the Gospel to reach every nation, language and people."

**Key Text:** Acts 1:8 & John 10:16

**Hymns:** Opening: #27 | Closing: 373

**Introduction:**

- "The Global Positioning System (GPS) is a satellite-based navigation system made up of at least 24 satellites . . . . The U.S. Department of Defense (USDOD) originally put the satellites into orbit for military use, but they were made available for civilian use in the 1980s."<sup>1</sup>
- GPS satellites orbit the earth twice per day in an exact path.
- Each satellite sends out signals that are picked up by GPS devices that uses various calculations to determine the user's exact location and path.
- Therefore, a GPS device can be used to assist you to:
  1. Measure your route (driving, flying, walking etc).
  2. Find your way home or to a select location
  3. As a church, we can use GPS to:
    - Allow persons to locate our church on the map
    - Easily find persons based on their address
    - Show the location of all our congregations (within a conference)
- Once your position has been determined, a GPS device can calculate your:
  1. Speed
  2. Trip distance
  3. Distance to destination
- The device must receive signals from at least 3 satellites to make accurate calculations.
- With the existence of GPS, you can say that Google or other companies that use this technology has the world "covered".
  - I. The book of Acts reveals that God also has a GPS system by which He has the world covered for the preaching of the gospel.
    - a. God's GPS is the Holy Spirit.
    - b. The gospels outline the work of Jesus in preaching the gospel and preparing the disciples for ministry
    - c. The book of Acts outlines the work of the Holy Spirit in fulfilling the commission that Jesus gave to them (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8).
    - d. Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

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<sup>1</sup> "About GPS", <https://www8.garmin.com/aboutGPS>, (Accessed July 4, 2018).

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

- e. The author of the book of Acts sought to record the progress of the work as Jesus promised:
    - i. Jerusalem,
    - ii. Judea,
    - iii. Samaria,
    - iv. Uttermost parts of the earth. Acts 1:8
  - f. Some key passages: –
    - i. “Acts 6:7 (NKJV) - Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”
    - ii. Acts 2:47 – “The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”
    - iii. Acts 8:1 (NKJV)
    - iv. “At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.”
  - g. The progress of the gospel went as Jesus promised. Starting from Jerusalem as the central point (**show Map**):
    - i. IN Jerusalem – Peter preached and 3,000 were baptized on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).
    - ii. IN Samaria – Phillip preached in Samaria (Acts 8:4-6 - READ)
    - iii. Then in all Judea and the rest of the world
- II. God’s GPS took the gospel into the South
- a. Israel is surrounded by two Thorofare to the North and South:
    - i. The South (Egypt) - gives access to Africa and
    - ii. The North (Syria) - gives access to Europe
    - iii. You read about this especially in the book of Daniel 11—**King of the South** against the **King of the North**. These are referring to the rulers of the two major geographic neighbours to Jerusalem.
  - b. In the book of Acts, you can trace God’s work in allowing the gospel to be preached into these regions using His GPS.
  - c. Besides the fact that many Jews of these nations were in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, we see a more direct strategy in Acts 8 and 9.
  - d. Acts 8:26, 27 – The Spirit told Phillip, “Rise and go toward the South”
    - i. God’s GPS picked up that a man of great influence came to Jerusalem for worship and was returning home empty—without the gospel.
    - ii. Therefore, the Spirit led Phillip to find the Ethiopian Eunuch.
    - iii. Phillip was in tune to God’s GPS, therefore, God was able to use him to connect with the Ethiopian Eunuch.

- iv. Phillip preached the gospel to him and baptized him.
  - v. This is one of the ways that the gospel went into Africa.
  - vi. The Bible doesn't record the progress, because Luke, who wrote the book of Acts, went to Europe.
  - vii. Ellen G. White says, "There are many who are reading the Scriptures who cannot understand their true import. All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in". Acts of the Apostles, 109
  - viii. The only way for us to find these people, is if we are in tune with God's GPS—the Holy Spirit
- III. God's GPS takes the gospel into the North
- a. Now the Lord needed someone to go up North.
  - b. For some reason or the other the Apostles remained in Jerusalem. (Read Acts 8:25)
  - c. In the next chapter, Acts 9, we find a man heading North, but he was on a different mission **(Show on Map)**
  - d. His name was Saul. Acts 9:1, 2
    - i. God's GPS picked up that Saul's heart was opened to the gospel despite his aggression towards the church.
    - ii. He knew that Saul was seeking for something deeper than the Pharisaic religion.
    - iii. God not only wanted to save him, but to use him to take the gospel to Europe.
    - iv. God's GPS showed that Saul was a Roman Citizen; therefore, would have easy access to Europe.
    - v. Now, God needed someone, like Phillip, who was in tune with His GPS, whom He could use to reach Saul.
      - 1. It would be difficult for the Lord to find a disciple to reach Saul, because they were all afraid of him.
      - 2. Therefore, the Lord Himself appeared to Saul. (Describe the scene – Read Acts 9:3-9
      - 3. Then the Lord (through His GPS) connected with Ananias to restore Saul's sight and baptize him.
    - vi. Saul turned Paul is responsible for taking the gospel into Asia and Europe (Colossians 1:23).
- IV. **Application:**
- a. This experience tells me that God has this world "covered" with His GPS.

- b. In John 10:16, Jesus said to the disciples, “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.”
- c. I believe that the Book of Acts is a fulfilment of this promise.
- d. There are some important principles found in this passage that outlines how God works to take the gospel into all the world:
  - i. “Other sheep I have”
    1. The Sinner belongs to Jesus and He takes personal responsibility for their salvation (John 3:16; Luke 15).
    2. The sinner might be lost, but he/she still belongs to Jesus.
    3. Many times, we give the impression that the burden for souls rest only upon us.
    4. The truth is, the burden for soul’s rests upon Jesus; and He has a plan for the gospel to reach into all the world.
    5. Our duty is to make sure that we relate to God’s plan
  - ii. “them also I MUST bring”
    1. Secondly, John 10:16, tells me that for the sinner to return home, it is Jesus who is going to bring them.
    2. John 6:44 (NKJV) - “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.”
  - iii. “they will hear My voice”
    1. The most important voice the sinner needs to hear is the voice of Jesus. That is why prayer is so important to evangelism.
    2. It’s not just for them to hear the correct doctrine or eloquent preaching; they are to hear the voice of Jesus.
  - iv. “there shall be one-fold and one Shepherd”
    1. God’s work will succeed
    2. Matthew 24:14— “This gospel of the kingdom must be preached into all the world as a witness.”
    3. The question is, “Will you be part of it?”
- e. There is much talk about the 10/40 window.
  - i. The 10/40 Window is home to some of the largest unreached people groups in the world
  - ii. “The 10/40 Window is the rectangular area of North Africa, the Middle East and Asia approximately between 10 degrees north and 40 degrees north latitude.”<sup>2</sup>
  - iii. Approximately 5.03 billion individuals residing in approximately 8,633 distinct people groups are in the current 10/40 Window.
  - iv. God’s GPS can take care of the 10/40 window.

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<sup>2</sup> Joshua Project, [https://joshuaproject.net/resources/articles/10\\_40\\_window](https://joshuaproject.net/resources/articles/10_40_window). (accessed July 4, 2018).

V. Conclusion

- a. This story illustrates that our greatest need as a church is not merely for the latest technology; but for the Holy Spirit.
- b. What we need is the assurance of God's presence and a willingness to cooperate with Him.
- c. "When we give ourselves wholly to God, and in our work follow His directions, He makes Himself responsible for its accomplishment." Christ Object Lessons, 363
- d. "The duke of Wellington was once present where a party of Christian men were discussing the possibility of success in missionary effort among the heathen. They appealed to the duke to say whether in his judgment such efforts were likely to prove a success commensurate to the cost. The old soldier replied: "Gentlemen, what are your marching orders? Success is not the question for you to discuss. If I read your orders aright, they run thus, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' Gentlemen, obey your marching orders" Christian Service 77.
- e. When we relate to the Holy Spirit, He will help us to reach all who are longing for the light of the gospel.

VI. Appeal/Altar Call:

- a. Call for persons to respond to the God's GPS—the Holy Spirit
- b. Call for persons to be God's agents to reach others with the gospel.