

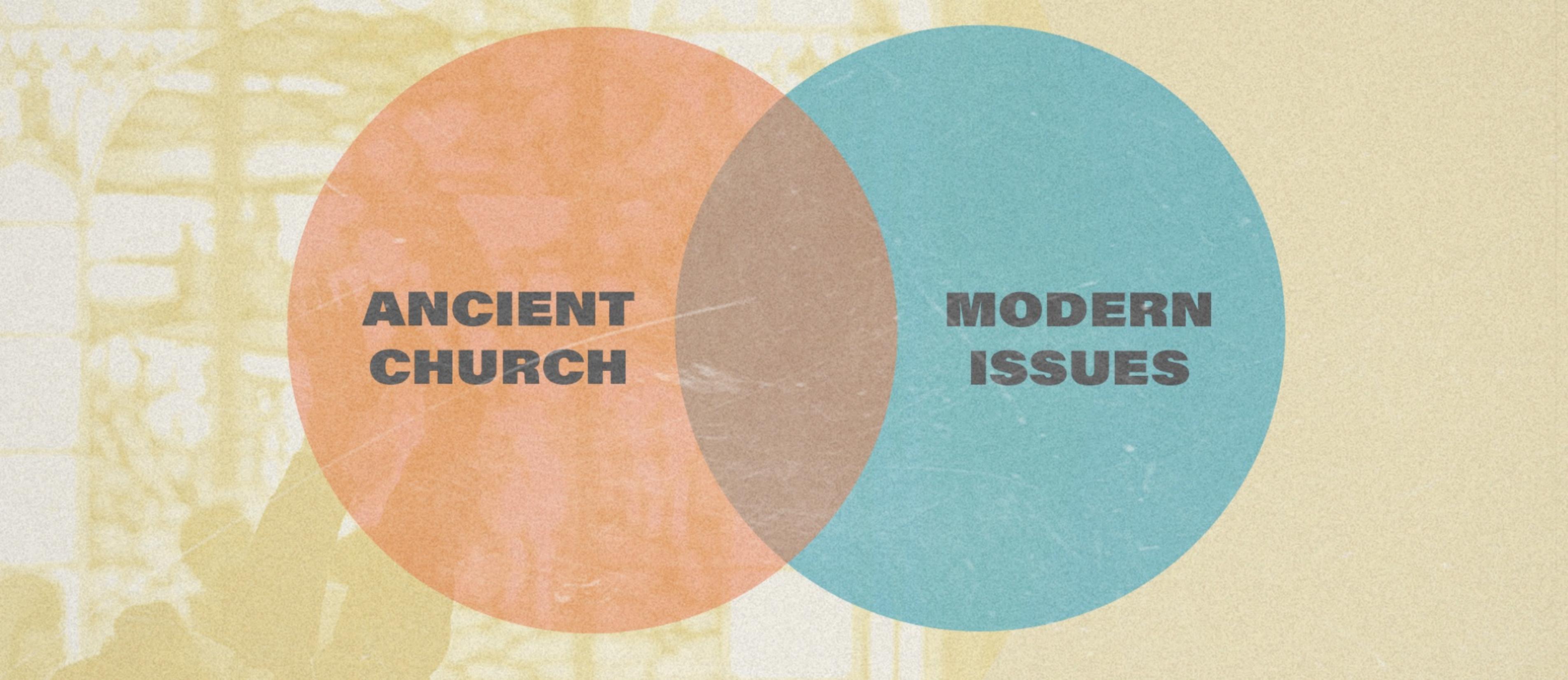
acts

— **VERSE BY VERSE**



Acts 1:8-9

[Jesus said,] “But you will receive **power** when the **Holy Spirit** comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses, telling people about Me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” After saying this, He was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see Him.



**ANCIENT
CHURCH**

**MODERN
ISSUES**

ACTS 1:1-5
+
LUKE 1:1-4

**CAN I
TRUST THE
CHRISTIAN
SCRIPTURES**



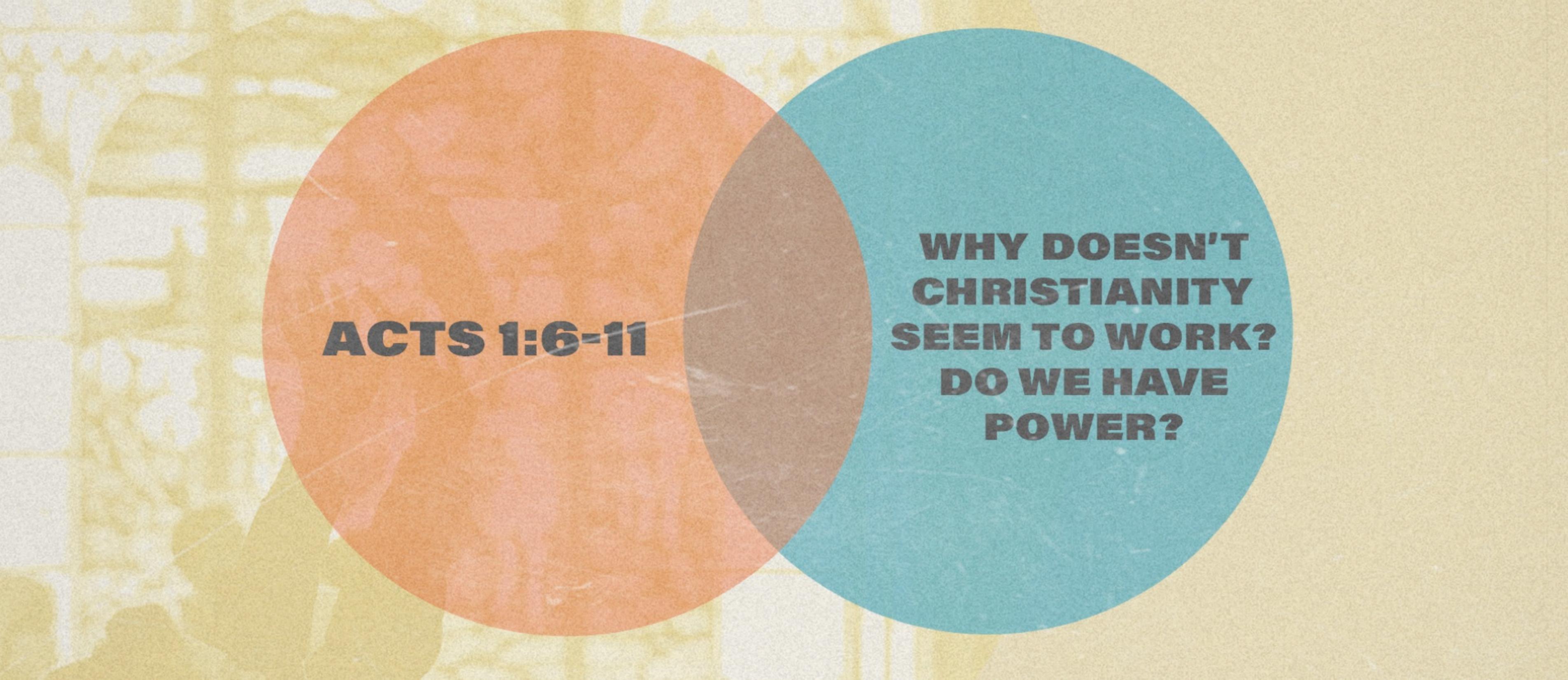
ACTS 1:6-11

**IS
"DIVERSITY"
CHRISTIAN?**



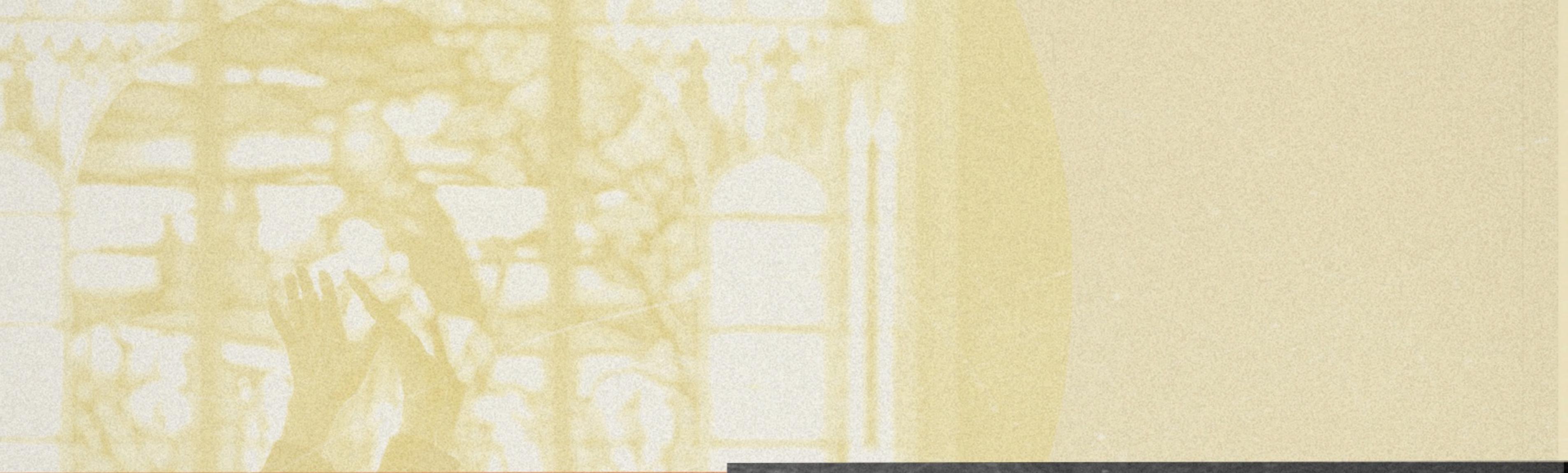
ACTS 1:6-9

**WHY IS THE
CHURCH
FACING A
CREDIBILITY
CRISIS?**



ACTS 1:6-11

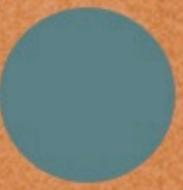
**WHY DOESN'T
CHRISTIANITY
SEEM TO WORK?
DO WE HAVE
POWER?**



The root of doubt and deconstruction is usually the trauma of disappointment.

We have power.

- **Christianity is by far the most charitable & humanitarian philosophy of thought ever.**
- **Christianity is by far the most ethnically and socially diverse religion ever.**
- **Christianity is the only faith system in which God is essentially love.**



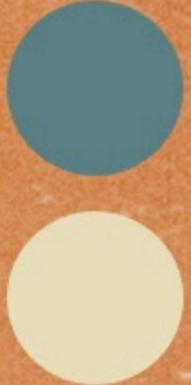
“Imagine there’s no heaven. It’s easy if you try.
No hell below us. Above us, only sky.
Imagine all the people. Livin’ for today.
Imagine there’s no countries.
It isn’t hard to do.
Nothing to kill or die for.
And no religion, too.”

- **Imagine by John Lennon**



“We must wake up to the fact that Lennon’s dream was a fantasy. What is worse, it was a fantasy fueled by white Western bias and grounded on the assumption that the world would follow where Western Europe led. The question for the next gen is not ‘How soon will religion die?’ but ‘Christianity or Islam?’”

- Rebecca McLaughlin



“There are some things so dear, some things so precious,
some things so **eternally** true, that they are worth dying for.
And I submit to you that if a man has not discovered
something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live.”

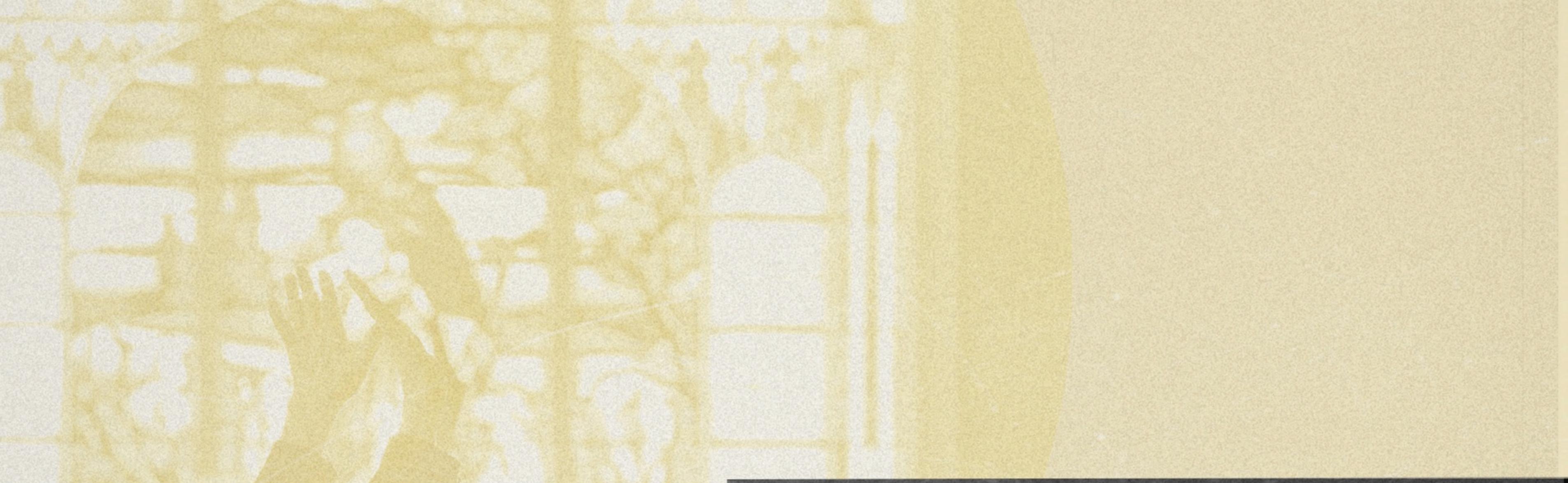
- MLK Jr.



Christianity works when you actually do it rather than dilute it or distort it.



**In Acts, our God, the Holy Spirit,
births the age of the Church
and builds the breadth of the Church
through the empowerment Jesus' disciples.**



I. Conversion

When we witness to the lost, we are empowered.

Acts 8:4-14

Samaritans & the Sorcerer

- Jesus wants the good news to go to Samaria.
 - No one wants to take it there.
 - It takes a persecution to get Philip to go first.
- He witnesses to the lost – preaching & compassion.
 - Even famous sorcerer named Simon is saved.
- Peter & John pray, Samaritans receive Holy Spirit, validating legitimacy of their conversion.
- Simon tries to buy franchise rights to the Holy Spirit.
- Simon learns Holy Spirit empowers the witnesses, not the wealthy.

Acts 8:18-24

Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give me also this power so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain God's gift with money! You have no part or share in this, for your heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and the chains of wickedness." Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may happen to me."

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Acts 8:4-14

Samaritans & the Sorcerer

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- Acts 2 – Pentecost – 3,000 saved**
- Acts 7 – Stephen calls mob opposers of the Spirit**
- Acts 8 – Samaritans are saved.**
- Acts 8 – Ethiopian Treasurer is saved.**
- Acts 8 – Azotus and surrounding region evangelized.**
- Acts 9 – Ananias preaches to Saul/Paul.**
- Acts 10 – Cornelius and family saved.**
- Acts 13 – Paul & Barnabas sent by Spirit to preach & plant.**
- Acts 13 – Paul saves a sorcerer, Elymas.**
- Acts 19 – Ephesian disciples baptized in John receive Spirit.**
- Acts 28 – Preaching to Gentiles in Rome.**



II. Multi-Ethnic Inclusion

When we witness across lines of prejudice, we are empowered.

Acts 1

Spirit empowers commission to Multi-Ethnic Witness.

Acts 1:8 – But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses, telling people about Me **everywhere**—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 2

Spirit births Multi-Ethnic Church at Pentecost.

Acts 2:5-12 – At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. They were completely amazed. “How can this be?” they exclaimed. “These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages!”

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Acts 2

Spirit births Multi-Ethnic Church at Pentecost.

“Here we are—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the areas of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs. And we all hear these people speaking in our own languages about the wonderful things God has done!”

They stood there amazed and perplexed. “What can this mean?” they asked each other.

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Acts 2:16~17

“...what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel:
‘In the last days,’ God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.’”

Acts 6 – Diverse Leaders, Full of the Spirit, Selected.

**Acts 8 – The Spirit takes the Gospel to Samaria, Ethiopia,
Azotus and surrounding region.**

Acts 9 – Paul, Apostle to Gentiles, receives Spirit.

Acts 10-11 – Spirit sends Peter to Cornelius and validates Gentile inclusion.

Acts 13 – Spirit sends Paul & Barnabas to plan multi-ethnic churches.

**Acts 15 – Peter testifies at Jerusalem Council on Spirit's validation
of Gentile inclusion.**

Acts 16 – Spirit compels Paul to witness in Macedonia.

**Acts 28 – Paul confirms Spirit's desire for God's
salvation to go to Gentiles.**



III. Encouragement

When we face hard times or persecution for our witness,
we are empowered.

Acts 20:22~24

“And now, as a captive to the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me. But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God’s grace.”

Acts 21:30-40

Paul was grabbed and dragged out of the Temple, and immediately the gates were closed behind him. As they were trying to kill him, word reached the commander of the Roman regiment that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. He immediately called out his soldiers and officers and ran down among the crowd. When the mob saw the commander and the troops coming, they stopped beating Paul. Then the commander arrested him and ordered him bound with two chains. He asked the crowd who he was and what he had done. Some shouted one thing and some another. Since he couldn't find out the truth in all the uproar and confusion, he ordered that Paul be taken to the fortress.

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Acts 21:30~40

As Paul reached the stairs, the mob grew so violent the soldiers had to lift him to their shoulders to protect him. And the crowd followed behind, shouting, “Kill him, kill him!” As Paul was about to be taken inside, he said to the commander, “May I have a word with you?”

“Do you know Greek?” the commander asked, surprised.

“Aren’t you the Egyptian who led a rebellion some time ago and took 4,000 members of the Assassins out into the desert?”

“No,” Paul replied, “I am a Jew and a citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia, which is an important city. Please, let me talk to these people.”

The commander agreed.

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Acts 22:1~2

“Brothers and esteemed fathers,” Paul said, “listen to me as I offer my defense.” When they heard him speaking in [Aramaic], the silence was even greater.

Acts 22:21-23

“But the Lord said to me, ‘Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles!’” The crowd listened until Paul said that word. Then they all began to shout, “Away with such a fellow! He isn’t fit to live!” They yelled, threw off their coats, and tossed handfuls of dust into the air.

Acts 4:7-14 – Emboldens Peter to speak before Temple
Leadership at risk of his life.

Acts 4:31 – Fills the church with courage during persecution.

Acts 7:54-8:1 – Empowers Stephen to die well.

Acts 9:31 – Facing persecution, offers church comfort.

Acts 13:9-11 – Emboldens Paul to face down evil sorcerer

Acts 13:49-52 – Gifts joy in the midst of rejection

Acts 20:22-24 – Strengthens Paul to face imprisonment
& persecution.

Acts 9:31

Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

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IV. Guidance

When we seek His direction, we are empowered.

Acts 16:6-12

They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been **forbidden** by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus **did not allow them**; so, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas.

Acts 16:6-11

They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When **they** had come opposite Mysia, **they** attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so, passing by Mysia, **they** went down to Troas. So, passing by Mysia, **they** went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” When he had seen the vision, **we** immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called **us** to proclaim the good news to them.

We set sail from Troas...

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Acts 1:5 – Jesus commands disciples to wait on HS direction.

Acts 1:15-26 – HS appoints new 12th disciple.

Acts 8:29 – HS points Philip to Ethiopian.

Acts 8:39 – HS snatches Philip to Azotus.

Acts 11:12 – HS sends Peter to Cornelius.

Acts 13:4 – HS sends Barnabus & Paul on 1st church planting trip.

Acts 16:6-10 – HS forbids Paul from traveling to Asia & Bithynia.

Acts 19:21 – HS sends Paul to Macedonia, Achaia, then Jerusalem for arrest.

Acts 20:28 – HS appoints overseers in Ephesus.



V. Supernatural Gifts

When we trust even when we are not enough, we are empowered.

Acts 2 – The disciples speak in foreign languages they don't know.

Acts 4:8 – Peter preaches beyond his stature and education.

Acts 4:31 – The Church preached w/ supernatural courage.

Acts 5:1-11 – Peter discerned beyond what he knew.

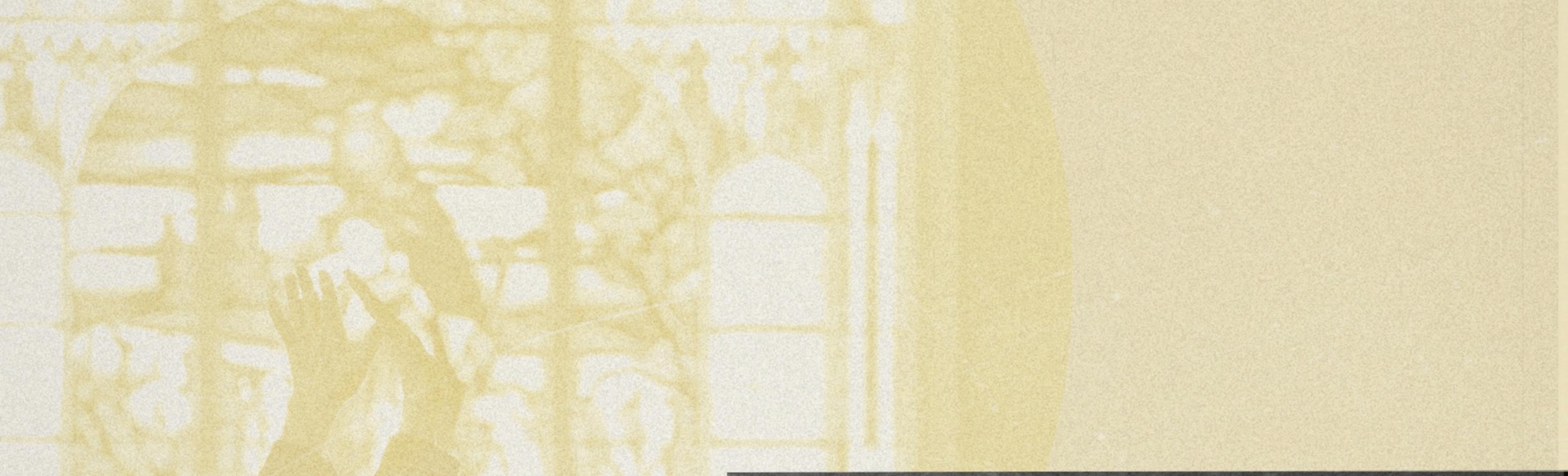
Acts 6:10 – Stephen spoke and persuaded with impenetrable wisdom.

Acts 11:28 – Agabus given supernatural foresight about a famine.

Acts 13:9-12 – Paul blinds an enemy sorcerer.

Acts 4:13

The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus.



Anytime we look elsewhere for power,
it robs the Spirit of His power in our life.

Proof That Political Privilege Is Harmful for Christianity

Our analysis of 166 nations suggests the biggest threat to Christian vitality is not persecution, affluence, education, or pluralism. It's state support.

NILAY SAIYA | MAY 6, 2021

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**VERSE
BY VERSE**

- 
- Analyzed global sample of 166 countries from 2010 to 2020.**
 - The biggest threat to Christian vitality is not persecution, affluence, education, or pluralism.**
 - It is the extent to which governments give official support through laws and policies.**
 - 9 of the 10 countries w/ the fastest declining Christian populations offer moderate to high levels of official support for Christianity.**

- 
- The presence of pluralism and absence of privilege means Christianity must be chosen for its actual merits and spiritual power rather than its social merits and political power.
 - There is no such thing as lukewarm Christianity when it may cost you welfare, prison, or worse.

“Our research suggests the best way for Christian communities to recover their gospel witness is to reject the quest for political privilege as inconsistent with the teachings of Jesus. In doing so, they would show that they take seriously Christ’s promise that no force will be able to prevail against His church. And rejecting privilege will make believers more reliant on the Holy Spirit to open hearts to the gospel message.”



Acts 1:8

[Jesus said,] “But you will receive **power** when the **Holy Spirit** comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses, telling people about Me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

If you want to experience the power of the Spirit:

1. witness to the lost.
2. witness across lines of prejudice.
3. witness in the face of persecution.
4. witness wherever He directs you.
5. witness even when you are not enough