

had been raised from the dead. In contrast to this attitude there are some in modern times who say that it is the present duty of Christians to establish the kingdom of God on earth, and that Jesus will not come back until the time of the last judgment. As we shall see in our further examination of the passage we have just read, our Lord's statements indicate clearly that both of these attitudes are wrong.

Acts 1:3 merely says that during the forty days after His resurrection our Lord spoke "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Then the fourth and fifth verses tell what is to be done immediately. He "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father."

If these two verses were to be taken entirely by themselves one might think that the disciples were always to remain in Jerusalem. This shows how easily one can be misled by taking one or two verses of the Bible out of context. Yet the fact that the disciples did stay in Jerusalem and made no attempt to reach out into other areas until persecution forced them to flee, makes one wonder whether they themselves failed to grasp the full import of the later commands, recorded in verse 8.

Actually Jesus had only told them to stay in Jerusalem until they should have been prepared by the Holy Spirit for the work that He wanted them to do.

God desires us to prepare for His work. A dull tool may not accomplish as much in a day as could be done in an hour by one that has been well sharpened. Occasionally God performs His work by using as an instrument a man who has had no more training for the task than Balaam's ass had when it spoke to the prophet, but such times are rare. Ordinarily it is God's will that His people become thoroughly prepared. Most of the leaders who have made a great impact on the world--such men as Augustine, Calvin, Luther and Wesley--had the best education available in their day in preparation for the great work that God desired them to do.