



Walking with the Spirit through the Book of Acts

Pastor Michael Cranford

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Schedule

- April 7 The Holy Spirit
- April 14 Acts 1:1-9
- April 21 Acts 1:10-2:21
- April 28 Acts 2:22-47
- May 5 Acts 3
- May 12 BREAK (Mother's Day)
- May 19 Acts 4



What is the Book of Acts?

1. The Spirit is the central figure
2. Acts is part 2 of a two-part history

In my former book, *Theophilus*, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. (Acts 1:1-2; NIV)

3. What part does the Holy Spirit play? He is the reason for everything you read.
4. Acts presents the account of the first witnesses to the Spirit-empowered life.



Acts 1 and the framework for the work of the Spirit

I. Christianity is based in a tangible reality—the proof of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. (Acts 1:3a; NIV)



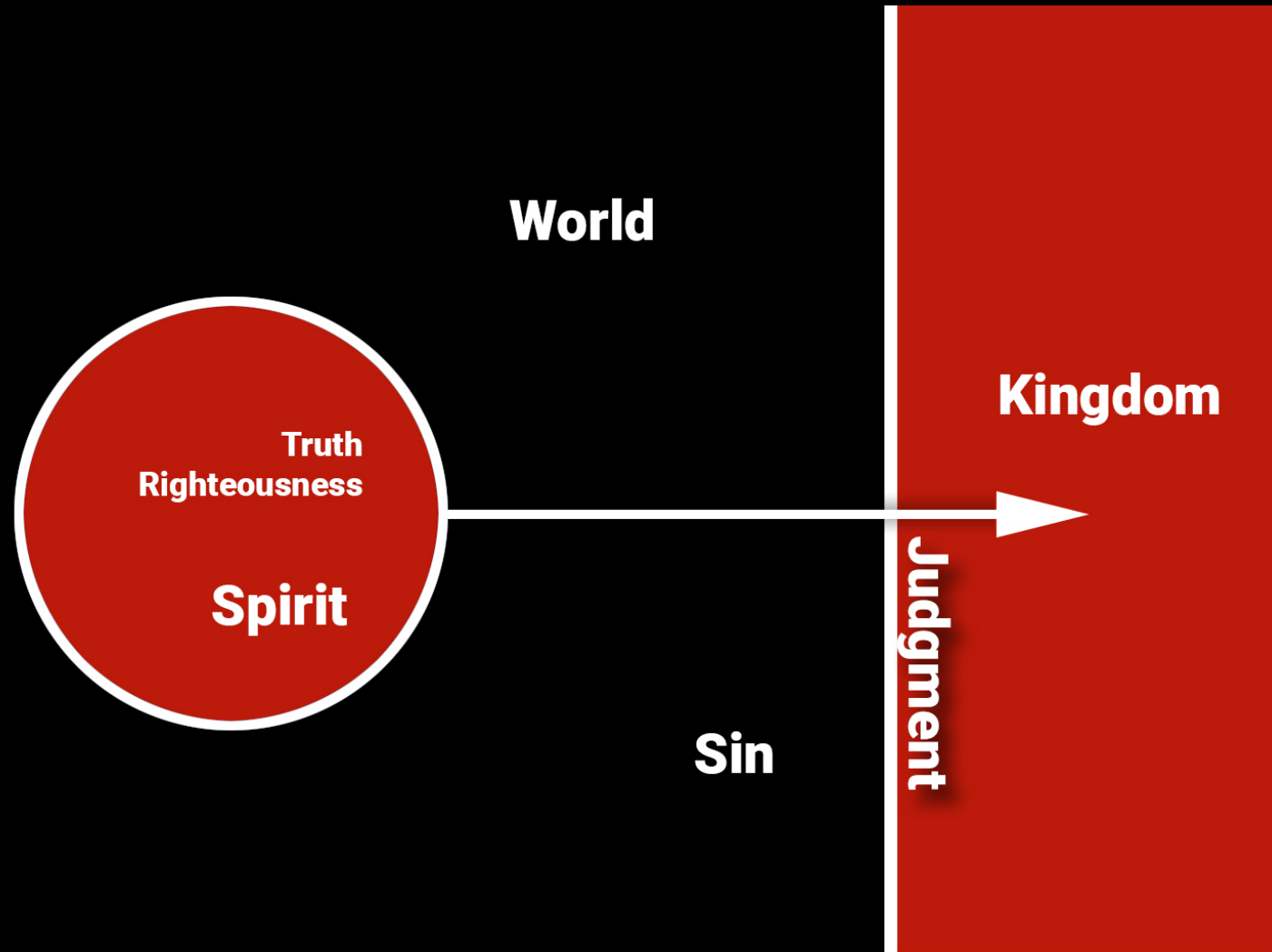
Acts 1 and the framework for the work of the Spirit

2. The Christian life and mission have a forward view—the Kingdom is the conclusion to the journey that begins in Acts and concludes with this end of this present age. The Kingdom is present and future.

He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.
(Acts 1:3b)



The Holy Spirit and the Coming Kingdom



Acts 1 and the framework for the work of the Spirit

3. Acts reminds us that the gospel is in tension with culture, that we need to be strategic and we need to rely on the Holy Spirit. Jesus predicted we would have trouble in this world (John 16:33)—so the apparent challenges to the gospel in Acts (and in our lives) are expected.

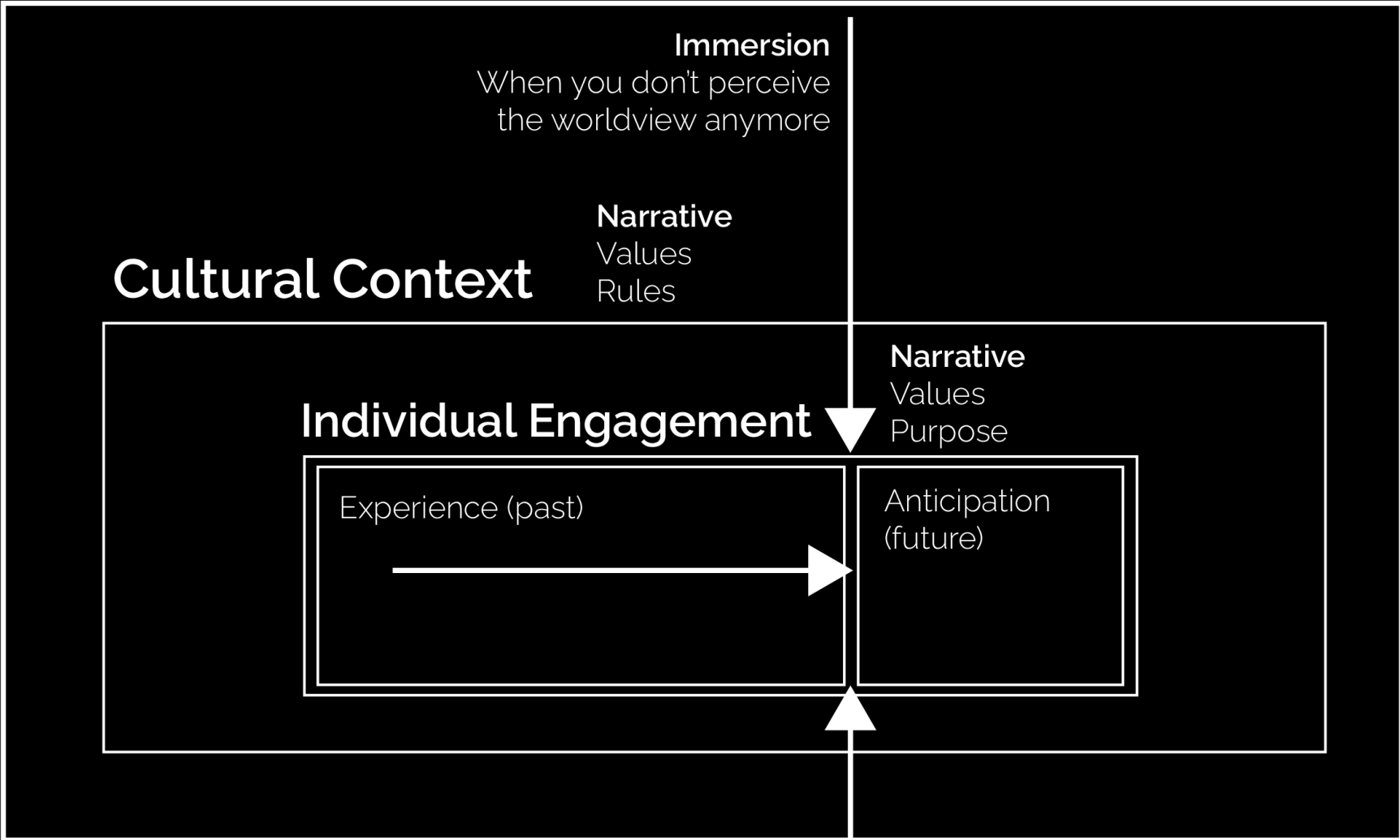
On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.” (Acts 1:4)



Worldview

Narrative
Presuppositions
Principles

Philosophy (either consciously or unconsciously adopted)



Acts 1 and the framework for the work of the Spirit

4. Acts is based on a radical shift in human existence that comes through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This is metaphorically identified as baptism. Baptism means change, transition, and death as a gateway to new life.

“For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 1:5)

John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” (Luke 3:16)



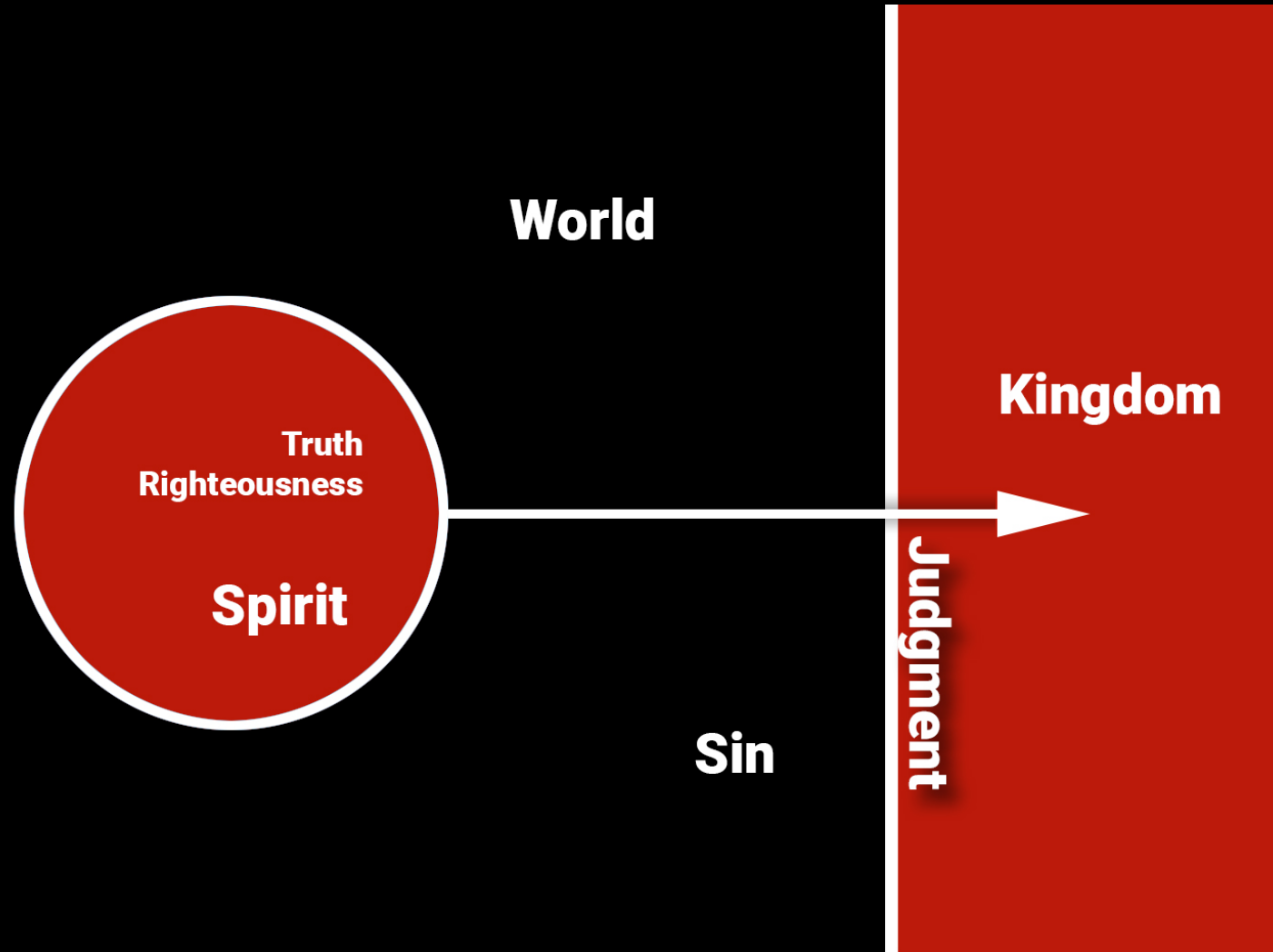
Acts 1 and the framework for the work of the Spirit

5. Acts reveals a time frame between the giving of the Spirit and the end of the age (the arrival of the Kingdom), and deliberately avoids any explanation for how long that time will last.

Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.” (Acts 1:6-7)



The Holy Spirit and the Present Age



Acts 1 and the framework for the work of the Spirit

6. Acts reveals the Holy Spirit as our source of power. This is not power for its own sake, but to fulfill our purpose in this life. Our purpose is nothing other than his purpose.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; ...” (Acts 1:8a)



Acts 1 and the framework for the work of the Spirit

7. God's purpose is realized throughout the world. The work of the Spirit is not limited by time, space, ethnicity, or any other human characteristic. It is powerful across the centuries. It is the same power today, in this corner of the world, that it was then.

“...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8b)

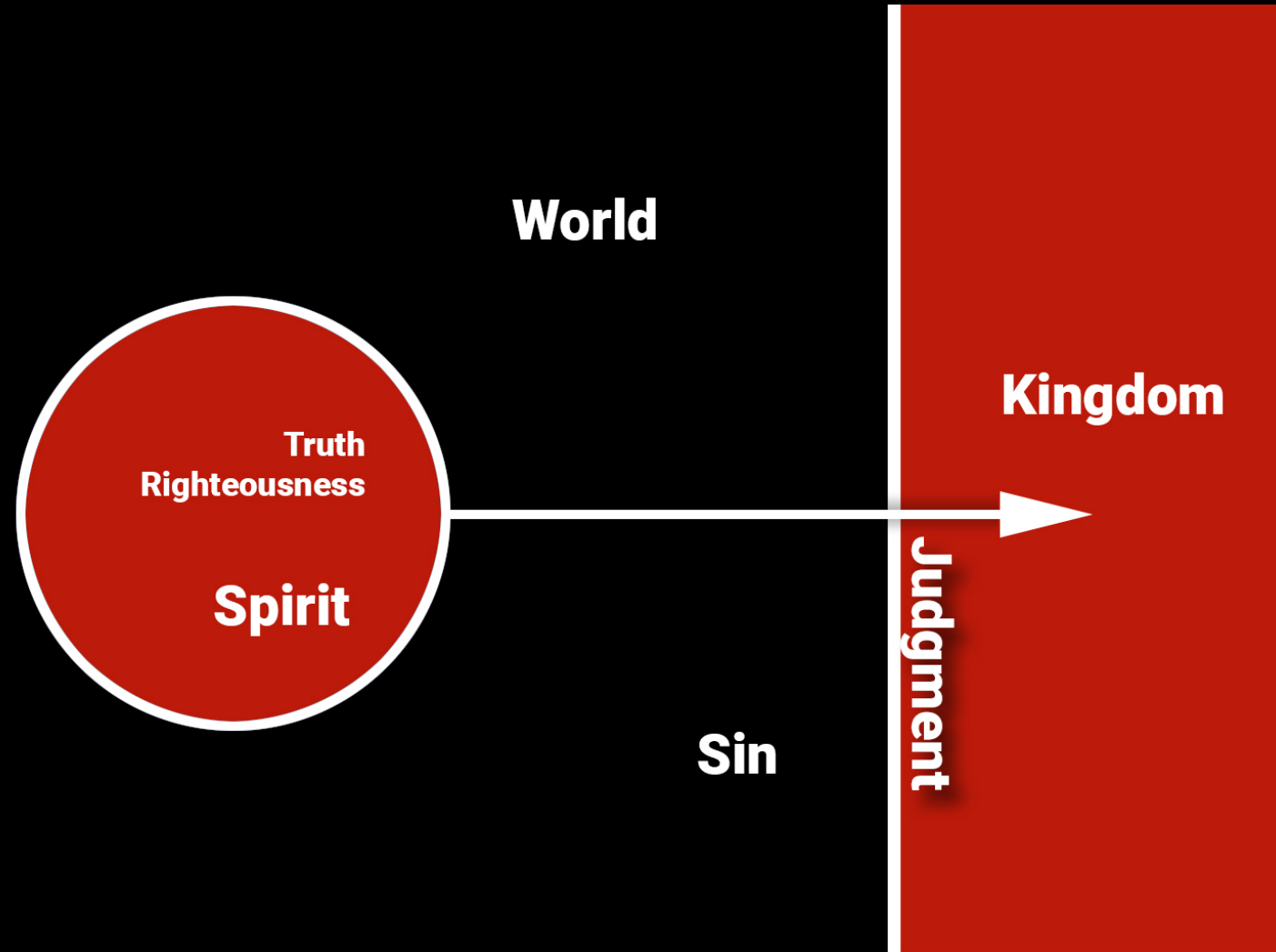
Witness in Jerusalem – Acts 3:1-8:3

Witness in Judea & Samaria – Acts 8:4-12:25

Witness to the ends of the earth – Acts 13:1-28:31



The Holy Spirit as the Boundary of God's People



Acts 1 and the framework for the work of the Spirit

8. The beginning of this work is specifically indicated by Jesus visibly transitioning his ministry to the church by leaving the earth in plain sight. This image brings closure and implies that we need to focus our eyes on what lies ahead and do what he says.

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. (Acts 1:9)

As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. (2 Kings 2:11)

