

Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

June 3, 2019

Understanding Your Job Description

ACTS: The Journey Continues

Acts 1:1-11

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- What did you hear?
- What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” ⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” **Acts 1:8-11**

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

Luke, writing to Theophilus, provides a summary of the book of Luke in the first five verses of Acts. In verse eight, Jesus explains to the disciples that through the power of the Holy Spirit, they will be his witnesses, spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth. The expansion of the gospel was rapid, and compelled people to seek for themselves what they saw in the early Christians. **Thomas points out that many modern churches have morphed into mirrors of our own beliefs, further dividing our communities and country. Instead of dividing ourselves, discuss how can Covenant and other groups to which we belong can use diversity as an opportunity. Considering the counter-cultural movement of the early church, are we as individuals and as a community busying ourselves with the right things, or do we too often seek success through a packed schedule?**

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” **What does the word “witness” mean to you, and why is it often associated with a certain degree of discomfort?**

We often associate being a witness to our faith with unworthiness, and fear of turning people off by being too open with our faith. If we look at witnessing as testifying to Jesus’ love and grace in our lives, then we are all qualified witnesses. True witnessing involves moving beyond our own self-imposed barriers and being prepared to show the true parts of ourselves. **Discuss times in which you have you been able to bear witness to God’s grace in your life.**

In verse nine, Jesus ascends into heaven, with minimal flair and elaboration. As the disciples gaze upward toward heaven, two men in white robes ask, “why do you stand looking up toward heaven?”.

Why do you think Luke provided such little emphasis on Jesus’ ascension into heaven? How can the question asked by the two men be interpreted as call to us to not be complacent in our daily living, simply waiting for the day when Jesus returns? How does it motivate you to focus and seek the work He has called you do here on earth?

Heavenly Father, we praise you for your great love, which is for us in spite of what the world tells us. Strengthen us to share our stories of your grace, so that others may know and be comforted by You. Amen.