



- **LN: This is the last week sermon notes will be available until community groups start up again in September. Community group summer break begins next week. We encourage all groups to connect socially throughout the summer as able.**
- **LN: We will contact you over the summer to determine if your group will continue and if you have open spots for fall registration.**  
**A BIG THANK YOU for faithfully shepherding and guiding your community group throughout this year!**

**I. Ice breaker. *Getting to know each other questions.* (10 minutes)**

- Are you someone who loves instructions (putting things together, recipes, home repairs etc.) and follows them closely, or would you rather wing-it and figure it out yourself?

**II. Read today's scriptures out loud, slowly, either in unison or using a designated reader and move into scripture quiet reflection. (3 minutes)**

<sup>1</sup> In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach <sup>2</sup> until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. <sup>3</sup> After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” <sup>6</sup> Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” <sup>9</sup> After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. <sup>10</sup> They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. <sup>11</sup> “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:1-11

**Scripture quiet reflection: (5-10 minutes)**

This is a time to personally reflect on this week's scripture. Have a paper and pen available.

**1. Read.** Read through the passage silently.

**2. Reflect.** Notice any words or phrases that particularly draw your attention and stand out to you. How do these words/phrases speak directly to you and your present situation? Write your insights.

**3. Respond.** As God has spoken to you in the Scripture, respond back to God in prayer. What do you want to say to God? What else does God want to say to you?

**III. Sermon and Scripture Application Discussion. (20-30 minutes)**

- A. As you reflectively engaged the Scriptures, what stood out to you from these passages?



- B. Luke wrote both the gospel of Luke as well as Acts. Read together the first four verses of the gospel of Luke, chapter one. Discuss the overall purpose of Luke-Acts.
- C. Luke emphasizes that Jesus gave his apostles instructions before he ascended to heaven.
- Discuss the importance and meaning of the Lord’s instructions.
  - What is Jesus giving the apostles instructions about?
  - Why does Luke emphasize that the instructions were given “through the Holy Spirit”?

**LN: The Greek word for instruction is *enteilamenos* which is a verb meaning to command someone for a purpose or with an end in mind...or imagining where you want someone to be. So, when Jesus taught his apostles he was teaching them with the intention that they not only heard what he was saying, but followed his marching orders. -HS**

- D. In short, the kingdom of God is the spiritual rule and reigning of God over his people. God is comprehensively engaged with every fiber of our being. How would you respond to the following questions?
- Does he have all of you?
  - Does he have your attention?
  - Can you truly say that you have submitted every area of your life to him?
- E. Historically speaking God’s presence dwelled in the tabernacle. But all throughout the Old Testament, it was God’s design and desire for his presence to dwell in his people.
- Read together Joel 2:28-32; Isaiah 32:15-20; 44:3-5.
  - So, when Jesus comes, he fulfills the Old Testament promise for God to be with and dwell in his people. And that could only happen through the Spirit. God is a promise keeper. When he says something, it comes to pass. We can always count on his Word (HS).
  - Is there a tough circumstance you are facing right now, perhaps with some fear, that you are willing to discuss?
  - How does it bring you comfort and boldness in tough circumstances to know that the Holy Spirit dwells within you?
- F. God empowers us to function in his Kingdom and his Kingdom is meant to be spread. Notice that the disciples respond to him with a nationalistic request. How did the disciples miss the point about the promise of the Holy Spirit?
- How have we also seen a nationalistic bias in the book of Jonah?
  - Jesus tells his disciples, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (1:8)



- How does the power of the Holy Spirit enable you to be a witness to Jesus Christ?
- Can you think of a time recently when you were able to step out courageously as a witness?
- One day Jesus is coming back, and we want Him to say, “well done, my good and faithful servant”. Pray for one another to keep in step with the Holy Spirit and to share courageously about your faith.

**LN- If there is time the following research about witnessing to Christ may be helpful for your group to discuss. The Barna Research Group published several research studies on evangelism and our understanding and approach to evangelism today as opposed to 25 years ago. The data is shocking to see how things have changed.**

- **In one study they did, they discovered more and more people believe being a witness is optional and not a priority.**
- **Another study resulted in findings that more and more Christians see sharing their faith as being wrong.**
- **Other barriers include the following: shame; embarrassment; social isolation (aliens and strangers in the world); wrong expectations, exclusivity of the gospel; and feelings of insecurity: “I don’t know how to share my faith”, “how will I defend my faith?”, “What if someone knows more than me?”**