

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (FOR MARCH 7, 2021)
For Community Groups or Personal Study

In the opening months of 2021 we have been asking the question, “what does God desire for us as His church here at Grace?” This is question we have asked in past years and will continue asking in the future. We do not want to drift and fade. We want to focus and flourish.

Throughout January we heard a clear call from Jesus (John 17) to pursue unity. We live out that unity both inside and outside the walls here at Grace. Internally it led us to make a significant change. Gracia de Cristo and Grace of Christ moved beyond simply sharing space to formally become One church. This required, and will continue to require, intentionality, humility, courage and grace. We worship together and we serve together! We are also reaching out to build bridges, deepen friendships, and demonstrate unity, with other Christian churches.

In February we highlighted God’s call for His “Gathered Church.” What does His church look like when it gathers together? We gather to pray, to sing praises to God, to listen to God’s word (the Bible), to grow as disciples (followers) of Jesus. The Gathered Church does not end with the Benediction on Sunday morning. That’s only the beginning.

This morning Bill will help us hear God’s call to be His “Scattered Church.” Seeking unity for the sake of unity is not enough. Gathering together for the sake of gathering together is not enough. United, empowered and equipped, we gather together, and then we scatter as His church throughout our community loving God and loving others!

2021.CHURCH: THE SCATTERED CHURCH

SERMON PASSAGE: ACTS 1:6-11

“⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ ⁷ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.’ ⁹ And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’”

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

This morning we turn to the book of Acts. Acts follows the four gospel accounts (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) chronicling the life, the miracles, the identity, power, and heart of Jesus. Acts provides us with details about the first days and years of the Christian church. Following the tragic murder of Jesus, and then the unbelievable yet true miracle of Easter (Jesus defeats death and returns to life), Jesus met with His closest followers and prepared them for the mission He was about to send them on.

Buckle up! His mission for them, and for us here at Grace, will bring healing and hope as Jesus rebuilds lives and transforms the world.

1. What question did Jesus’ followers have for Him, and what were they expecting to happen? (v.6) What did “restoring the kingdom of Israel” mean to them?
2. Note how kind Jesus was as He responded to their question. How was God’s plan different than they expected? (vv.7-8)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

3. Why did Jesus suddenly leave them? How were they supposed to accomplish the mission they were given without Jesus there with them? See Matthew 28:18-20, John 16:5-15.
4. Were His followers (disciples) expected to accomplish their God-given mission on their own, or even as a group?
5. What does the Holy Spirit provide to those sent by God?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

6. What is your understanding of God’s mission for His church? For you personally?
7. What are you now doing to fulfill God’s call (mission, purpose) for your life?
8. How are you currently sharing in God’s mission at Grace of Christ?

Notes: _____

Spend time in silence, praying (even if just for a minute or two). Prayer is simply a conversation with God. Be honest. If you don’t know how or what to pray admit that and ask God to help you pray. In your prayer ask God to help you understand His mission for your life. Ask Him to help you live out that mission as part of His scattered church in Yakima. Ask Him to help you love Him and love others. He will help you (us).