



# MISSIONS: FIGHTING THE RIGHT FOE

EPHESIANS 6:10-20

## Icebreaker

This is a question meant to generate discussion among the group. Often, the introduction question can be “lighthearted” and help group members get to know one another.

**Did your parent or guardian ever answer your question of “Why?” with “Because I said so!”? What did you think about that answer?**

**Have you ever used “Because I said so!” to answer your own children’s question of “Why?”**

## Context

After the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, He appeared to many, many people and spent time teaching His followers before He returned to heaven. Forty days after His resurrection, Jesus is about to ascend back to the Father, but He left some final instructions for the apostles. These final words are the “marching orders” for not only the apostles, but for all people who follow Jesus. We pick-up the story just after Jesus reminded them that the Father will send the Holy Spirit to empower them for ministry. He is asked a question that the disciples think is really, really important, but Jesus’ answer probably left the disciples feeling a little disappointed and rebuked.

## Passage

Acts 1:6-14

<sup>6</sup> So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> 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.” <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, <sup>11</sup> 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.”

<sup>12</sup>Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. <sup>13</sup>And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. <sup>14</sup>All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

## Discuss

Verses 6-7

**What answer were the disciples hoping to hear from Jesus to their question in verse 6?**

**Why do you think that people are more interested in end times/eschatology/end of the world information today than any other time in the last 20 years?**

**According to Jesus' answer in verse 7, can people know when Jesus will return and God's Kingdom will be fully implemented on earth?** (Any answer other than "No" is wrong. When you consider Mark 13:32-33 and this verse together, NO ONE can know the time. Any attempt to know the time is futile and any claim to know the answer is a lie and sin.)

Verse 8

**Jesus gives the command to the disciples, "you will be my witnesses" in the middle of verse 8. What does a witness do in a court/legal proceeding?**

**Ask 1 or 2 people to share their testimony (eye witness account) of how they became a Christian.**

If you have a Bible handy, look in the back of your Bible at the "book" of maps. Find a map that has a title something like "Palestine at the time of Jesus". Now read verse 8, remembering that this conversation is happening near Jerusalem. **What do you notice about the progression of the mission given to Jesus' followers?**

Verse 9-11

**At work, do you like to know how you are contributing to the overall job, or are you content to do the tasks you are assigned?**

**Why did the angels tell the disciples that Jesus will be returning one day?**

**Does the thought that Jesus could return at any moment make you happy or anxious? Why?**

Verses 12-14

In reading all of verses 1-11 of Acts 1, Jesus has told the disciples that they are to go and share the Gospel with others AND the Holy Spirit will empower them to accomplish that mission. At this point, the Holy Spirit had not been given to these believers.

**What did the disciples “do” while waiting for the Holy Spirit? How is spending time in prayer an act of faith, especially when there is a job to be done?**

**Is there a time where you were being asked to “do” something, but you believed that it was more important to spend time praying and waiting for clear direction to start doing the task? Share your story.**

**According to verse 14, what effect did the disciples praying together have on the group?**

## **Next Steps**

As a church, we encourage people to be involved in missions in four specific ways. Here are four ways you can be on mission.

**Pray:** We are calling the church to pray regularly for Brazil in 2021. We will provide information and prompts to help you know how you can be praying. Additionally, you can use our “Prayer Q”, which is our weekly prayer list. We list our mission partners and prayer needs in here each week.

**Give:** Each year we have special offerings for missions. These special offerings include:

- Lottie Moon Christmas Offering- used for Southern Baptist international missions
- Annie Armstrong Easter Offering- used for Southern Baptist missions in North America
- Maguire State Mission Offering- used for Florida Baptist mission work in Florida

- General Budget: a portion of giving to our general budget goes to the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention to fund missions, seminaries, and agencies

Send: You may get the opportunity to provide prayer and/or financial support for our church members who go on a mission trip. Your generosity allows people who have the calling and time but not the resources to go on a mission trip.

Go: All of us are called to be missionaries wherever God places us. You can reach your neighbors in your own circle of influence. You can serve with one of our ministry partners like Pregnancy Solutions, Homeless Coalition, or other mission opportunities. When Covid restrictions are loosened, you can say yes to going on a mission trip locally, regionally, or internationally promoted by the church.