



Close & Far

3-Nov: Going & Serving Locally

Series Summary: Scripture clearly teaches us that every believer in Jesus is called to live on a mission (Matthew 28:18-20). We are all missionaries sent out into the mission field both locally and abroad (Acts 1:8).

Series Call to Action: Take your next step to go on mission for Jesus

Get Them Talking: What was the high point of your week?

How did the people respond to Jesus when they saw Jesus? Why do you think that some doubted while others believed that Jesus was alive?

Leader Note: After His resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days with His followers encouraging and instructing them in their mission to live for Him and to spread His message close and far. In Acts 1:1-9, we read about His teaching and His instruction to believers to be His witnesses.

Read the passage.

Acts 1:1-9 **1** In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach **2** until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. **3** 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. **4** 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. **5** For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

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

8 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.”

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

Leader Note: Acts was written to a man named Theophilus. It was written by Luke so the “former book” referred to in Acts 1 is the Gospel of Luke.

Why did Jesus spend 40 days with His followers before returning to heaven?

If you were one of His disciples, do you think that you would need convincing proof that He is truly alive? How would it change you and your commitment to Him if He proved that He suffered and died but is now alive?

In v. 4, what did Jesus command His followers to do? Why did He want them to wait?

GOING AND SERVING LOCALLY

Jesus spent 40 days with His disciples before returning to heaven so that they could learn about His kingdom and so that He could teach them about their mission in the world. Many had spent 3 years hearing His teaching and witnessing the miracles, but now He had their full attention because He suffered on the cross, died, and was raised again. As He taught them, they wanted some of their questions answered, but He was more concerned about them being His witnesses.

He told them to wait in Jerusalem and He promised them that if they waited on Him, they would receive power and become His witnesses. His promise of power was the promise of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospels, Jesus promised to send one who was greater than Himself when He left the disciples. He remembered this promise and the Spirit would soon come to live inside all believers.

Listen to what He told them in Acts 1:8: **8** 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.”

He told them that with His power they would become His witnesses close and far. He wanted to use them where they were and where He would lead them. He wants to do the same with us. He wants to use us to serve Him where we are and where He calls us.

Here’s the thing though, Jesus told the believers to wait before they went. But if you are a believer in Jesus, you don’t have to wait. You have His Spirit inside of you. You have the power and the ability to serve Him now and to help others know Jesus. As you think about His power in you, begin to look at the world around you to see how you can be His witness at home, at school, in your community, and in our church.

Why did the early believers have to wait for the Spirit to come before they became His witnesses?

Leader Note: They had to wait because the Holy Spirit empowers and enables believers to serve Jesus. When we serve others, we don't do it in our own ability and power, we do it with the power of God.

Do we need to wait to serve others in our community? Why not?

What can you do this week to discover where the Spirit desires for you to serve others at home, at school, in our communities, and in our church?

Leader Note: Lead kids to see that they should pray for God to show them the opportunities that are around them every day. Let them see that they can pray every day, "God, show me how to serve others today."