

READ: Acts 1:1-11

“At its core the church gets its mission from the mission of Jesus: to seek and to save the lost. Jesus was sent by God for this purpose. So a fundamental part of the church’s DNA has to be that same kind of sending into the world for the sake of the kingdom.”-- Ed Stetzer, SENT

SHARE

This weeks action: Seek to understand the culture you live in (your Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria) by learning about it:



I. Listen to one radio show, watch one TV show/movie or read one magazine that is popular in your culture (the people around you) that you normally do/would not.

1. What are some things you appreciated and learned from the show or magazine? How was God imaged or glorified by it?
2. What are some things that were not honoring to God in it? What would it take or look like for the Gospel to re-orient those things to glorify God?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**I. The Message** :: Read Acts 1:1-5

“...Luke...is telling us with his opening sentence one of the most important things about the whole book which is now beginning. It is all about what Jesus is continuing to do and to teach. The mysterious presence of Jesus haunts the whole story. He is announced as King and Lord, not as an increasingly distant memory but as a living and powerful reality, a person who can be known and loved, obeyed and followed, a person who continues to act within the real world. That, Luke is telling us, is what this book is going to be all about.”--Tom Wright, Acts for Everyone

1. Why did Luke write the book of Acts and it’s prequel the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1-2)?
2. Read Luke 24:36-49. What did Jesus do and teach the disciples about himself and the Kingdom of God? What is the Gospel (Acts 1:3, Luke 24:46-47)?
3. What is the significance of Jesus taking more time to prepare the minds of the disciples before sending them out (vs. 3-4)? Why is it important and how can you learn about Jesus and his mission?

II. The Mission :: Read Acts 1:6-8¹

“...it is clear from the rest of the book of Acts that this commission (Acts 1:8) is given to all Christians...Jesus Christ makes his church a people-in-mission. The Latin word *missio* means “sent”. Mission and witness is not an aspect of our existence as the church. We exist to be witnesses.”

--Evangelism: Studies in the book of Acts, Redeemer Presbyterian Church (New York)

1. What does Jesus call the disciples (and ultimately the church) to do? Who empowers the mission? Where does he call people to go?

¹ For further study of verse 1:8 fulfilling God’s promises, see: Isaiah 32:15, 43:10, 43:12, 44:8, 49:6, 45:22

2. How is this picture of the mission of Jesus to the world different than your view of the church? Your life?
3. How does this call to mission influence your thinking about your life? Where has God called you?

III. The Men :: Read Acts 1:9-11

“It’s not my place to presuppose the specifics of where God has sent you....I can say with certainty, however, that if you are a Christ-follower, you’ve been sent. Just as God has sent messengers, His Son, and the church of the past, He has sent you as part of His church into the hostile territory of your surrounding culture. The only question is whether or not you are willing to reorder your life around the recognition of His sending.”

--Ed Stetzer, SENT

1. What happens to Jesus (1:9)² and how do the disciples respond to his command to be witnesses to the end of the earth (1:10-11)? How does the angels promise bring comfort to them and us (1:11)?
2. What causes fear in you about being sent by Jesus on mission to be his witness? (What causes you to “stand” as opposed to “go”)?
3. How can you reorder your life around the recognition of His sending (quote above)? What will it cost?

CONNECTING QUESTIONS

1. What is your goal for this community group and series in Acts? What is your plan to accomplish it?
2. What are places, relationships, spheres of influence where God has you that he wants you to have an impact in 2010?

Next weeks action to share: Next week, plan to cross a social or ethnic barrier by going to an authentically ethnic restaurant or social event that is diverse from you. Talk, listen and watch to see how this culture is different than yours. What can you learn from this culture? What would it be like for you to connect relationally with this culture?

²For further study of Jesus leaving the disciples, see John 16:4-16