

Growth Group Questions – Acts Week 1

Introduction Questions:

- How are you doing?
 - [This question will always be here – it’s optional, but may help bring the passage back to mind if you meet later in the week] - If you heard the sermon this week, was there any part of the message or scripture passage that was particularly important or meaningful to you? If so, what?

Read: Acts 1:1-26

Understanding Questions:

- What Gospel does the writer of Acts reference in the very first lines of this book? How does the writer present this book as a continuation of the Gospel story?
- How long does Jesus stay with the disciples after his resurrection? What could be the significance of this number?
- The disciples initially seem to still be preoccupied with the question of when Jesus will set up an earthly kingdom. What is Jesus’ answer to this?
- Where do the disciples go after Jesus’ ascension? Who, besides the disciples, are also in the room?
- Why did the disciples feel the need to add Matthias to their group and how did they go about deciding between him and Joseph/Barsabbas/Justus? Is this how decisions/discernment continues to be made going forward in Acts?

Application Questions:

- In this initial introduction to Acts, the disciples are referred to as ‘witnesses’ numerous times [i.e. Acts 1:8]. What does this term mean in context and how do you see yourself as a ‘witness’ today? What are you a witness of?
- After Jesus’ ascension, two men in white robes ask the disciples, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven?” Where do you think the men in white robes think the disciples should be looking? Where should we be looking today?
- The disciples devote themselves to steadfast prayer both after Jesus’ ascension [Acts 1:14] and also as they cast lots to determine who should be added to their mission [Acts 1:24]. How do you find prayer helps you in times of great disturbances or when an important decision needs to be made? What are some examples?
- Acts is deliberately constructed as a continuation of the gospel story. How did the gospel story continue in your own life this week?

Additional Notes:

- The writer of Acts refers to the Gospel of Luke in the opening verses [and is presumed to be the same author as Luke]. He writes to Theophilus, a name that means ‘friend of God.’ This may have been a person by that name or the writer’s name for all friends of God.
- In Luke and Acts, the writer consistently emphasizes the Holy Spirit acting with and through the disciples (for example: 1:8, 2:4, 4:8, 31; 6:3, 5, 8:16, 10:44)
- A Sabbath’s day journey is about half a mile [Acts 1:12]
- The scriptural quotations referenced in Acts 1:20 are from Psalm 69:25 and Psalm 109.8
- In Luke’s view, an apostle had to have been with Jesus beginning from the baptism of John [Acts 1:21-22]. Therefore, for Luke, Paul will not acquire that title (except in 14:14). The apostle’s primary task is to “witness with us to his resurrection.” [Acts 2.32, 3.15, 4.33, etc.]
- The tradition of casting lots as a form of discernment [such as in picking Matthias as the newest disciple] becomes obsolete for the disciples after Pentecost and the emergence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.