

TALK IT OVER

How is everyone doing right now? Do you have any needs? (Push a little here. Everyone is dealing with the virus and isolation so make sure you know how your people are doing.)

Read the Apostles Creed together (Found on 3r page & we are focusing in today on the 5th sentence) and then Acts 1:1-11 (Passage is on 2nd page. Theophilus was a wealthy benefactor that allowed Luke to write the Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles). Once you've read the passage ask these questions:

- What new thing did you discover in the story that you did not know before?
- What did you learn about God? (Scripture tells us that Jesus is our advocate and that he intercedes on our behalf [1 John 2:1/ Hebrews 7:25]. What does that mean? Why does Jesus have to intercede on our behalf? How does this tie into Joe saying Jesus was our representation? How does Jesus satisfy God the Father's desire for justice and grace? There are a lot of theories as to the end of days and Jesus' return. What we know w/out a doubt is that Jesus will return. In the passage Joe read- Rev. 21- we see God's overarching will complete. What does this picture tell us about God and his desire for humanity?)
- What did you learn about people? (Why was the early church so radically changed? Why do you think we don't see that change today? Or do you? Explain. Why do people so easily live in the lies of the Accuser rather than the truth of our Advocate Jesus? If Jesus followers really believe that one day, he will return then how can we live that out today? How does knowing we have a responsibility to bring heaven to earth change how we live right now? How can we, wisely, live that out in our new normal?)
- What will you take away from this discussion? (Joe said the Ascension was Jesus pulling the pin sending out an explosion of power. That power still exists today yet we often don't live in it. How can we begin to live in the power of the Holy Spirit? How can we in light of COVID-19?)
- What will you do with what you have learned? (What steps do you need to take, right now, to have Jesus be your representation or bring heaven to your part of earth? How can we help you in those steps?)
- Is there anything else you wanted to share that we didn't hit in this discussion?
- Next week make sure to read Acts 2:1-18. Think through the questions we ask weekly as you read.

Make sure to check in with your SG this week. How can you pray for them? This is where the discipleship aspect comes in. Work towards identifying your 3 (that you can really pour into) and then your 1 (that person that will replicate what you're doing now). Take a few minutes each day and make a text or phone call to everyone in the group.

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Make sure to read ahead of time and either retell the story or have someone (multiple people) help you retelling the story. Make sure to use your update with points from Joe's sermon.

In my first book^[a] I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach² until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit.³ During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

⁴ Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before."⁵ John baptized with^[b] water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

The Ascension of Jesus

⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

⁷ He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know."⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

⁹ After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him.¹⁰ As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them.¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!"

Apostles Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.