

4/12/15 - Empowered For Jesus' Mission

Acts 1:1-11

Go! Make Disciples! Baptize and teach them! This is the mission that Jesus gave to his church (Matthew 28:16-20). It's not just for pastors, missionaries, and super Christians. It's for every person who calls Jesus "Lord." The mission sounds daunting. Yet deep down we know this calling is really, really important. Someone needed to obey Jesus' disciple-making call in order for you and me to be disciples ourselves – and for Bethany Church to even exist!

The story in Acts begins just after Jesus was raised from the dead. Jesus gives his disciples some instructions and then leaves for heaven (Acts 1:1-11). But he really doesn't leave because he sends his Spirit to empower his church (Acts 2:1-13). Through the Holy Spirit Jesus is truly present. The disciples begin to preach Christ in Jerusalem in the power of the Spirit (Acts 2:14-36). Thousands repent and believe in Jesus (Acts 2:37-47). And the church is born!

Two thousand years later we find ourselves in Southern California, gathered together in Long Beach to worship and proclaim Jesus. We have the same mission, the same Spirit, and access to the same power. Let's dig in to Acts – for the glory of Christ and the good of greater Long Beach and beyond!

As a small group read Acts 1:1-11

1. What stood out or challenged you from the Sermon on Sunday?
2. Read Luke 1:1-4. What do you learn about Luke's personality? Based on this introduction to the Gospel of Luke, what might you expect about the book of Acts?
3. In Acts 1:3; Luke refers to "many proofs" of Jesus' resurrection. Read the following passages and record the evidence in each account. Luke 24:1-12, John 20:19-29
4. What might the apostles be thinking when they ask the question in Acts 1:6? Based on Jesus' response in verse 7-8, what is Jesus trying to teach them?
5. Verse 8 states the theme of the book of Acts. In your own words, what is this theme?
6. Consider Acts 1:8, Romans 1:5, and Matthew 28:16-20. What is the mission of the church?
7. We have access to real spiritual power for our witnessing (Acts 1:8). How might this reality impact you as you seek to make disciples in Long Beach? What does it look like practically to lean into the Spirit's power for our witnessing?
8. Write down friends, family members, co-workers, and neighbors etc. who do not know Christ. Take a few minutes to pray for them now in your Small Group. Thank God for His promise to give you power as you witness to them.
9. Read Romans 8:34 and Ephesians 1:15-23. What is the significance of the Ascension?

Pray as a group to close your time together.