

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

*1*In my first book I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach *2*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 his crucifixion, 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 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!”

Acts 1:1-11 (NLT)

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid “go through this guide word-for-word.” There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. This guides rely heavily on a few other study guides; including: Serendipity NT for Groups by the Young Life ministry (ISBN is N/A), “Acts: Seeing God’s Power in Action” by Phyllis LePeau (ISBN 9780830830077), “Acts: Seeing the Spirit Work” by John Stott (ISBN 0851113907), “Acts” by N.T.Wright (ISBN 9780830821853), “Acts” by NavPress (ISBN 0891091122), “Acts” by Blackaby (ISBN 9781418526429), “Acts: The Spread of the Gospel” by John MacArthur (ISBN 9781418508746), “Book of Acts” by Max Lucado (ISBN 0849953006).

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- What movie sequel was, for you, as good, or better, than the original?
 - o Which movie do you wish would produce a sequel? What part would you cast yourself in?
- o: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

v.1-11

- o: v.1 references Luke's (the author of Acts) first book (the Gospel of Luke). How does Acts pick up where Luke 24:45-53 leaves off? Discuss the context of what is going on as Luke's second book (Acts) begins.
 - Follow-up: What is the significance of the fact that Jesus showed Himself to the apostles and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive? (hint: it shows that the resurrection is historical, and a critical foundation for us,.... JESUS is ALIVE and has conquered death!)
 - Follow-up: How is your hope and confidence in Jesus affected by what you learn of Him in this passage?
 - Follow-up: Look at Luke 1:1-4. what does this say that Luke/Acts is meant to be?

- o: What do the disciples anticipate is going to happen now that Jesus has risen from the dead (v.6).
 - Note: They ask this question because Jesus has been talking about God's kingdom (v.3)
 - Follow-up: In what ways does their idea of the kingdom (v.6) differ from Jesus' (v.7-8)?

- o: What instructions and insights did Jesus give His followers concerning the Holy Spirit?

- o: Following the ascension of Jesus into heaven, what did the believers do (see v.12-14)?

- l: If you were a disciple in v.9, (remember everything that has happened recently for the disciples), how would you feel when you saw Jesus go into heaven?
 - Follow-up: How would you feel after hearing the angel's promise in v.11?

- l: In what ways does Jesus prepare and equip his followers to continue His ministry and life on earth?
 - Note: Another way to ask this question: The primary way that Jesus equipped the apostles was the promise of the Holy Spirit. What was going to be the result of the Holy Spirit coming on them?
 - Follow-up: Discuss "self-motivation" vs. waiting and responding to God's Spirit... use this passage to discuss this tension and how we're to live/be responsive to the Holy Spirit (note: see John 15:4-5!).

- A: Put yourselves in the shoes of the apostles; how would you feel if you were the first one(s) to be given the task as described in v.8?
 - Follow-up: How are you affected by the promise in v.11.

- A: How do you respond to the idea that Jesus is "a person who can be known and loved, obeyed and followed, a person who continues to act within the real world?"

- A: Jesus basically tells the disciples in this passage to wait for the Holy Spirit... Think of a time when you were eager to get started with something and had to wait. What was the value of waiting?
 - Follow-up: How do you think God might have you/us waiting right now? What can/should we be doing in this time of waiting?

Recommended Follow-up:

- Read: Next week's sermon (9/16/2012) will focus on Acts 1:12-26. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.