

EXPERIENCING GOD TOGETHER

As a way of experiencing God through our hearts and mind, spend some time reading and responding to the Scripture from the sermon. Use the prompts below to guide your time:

1. Read Acts 1:6-11 slowly and carefully out loud together.

Take your time. Since there is a limited amount of text to get through, consider inviting different people in the group to read the passage more than once.

After your first couple of reads, pause & reflect (2-3mins) - *what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention as you read?*

2. Read the text together again.

After your second read through, pause & reflect (2-3mins) - *how do the words, phrases or ideas you are noticing relate to your life at the moment? What do you think God might be trying to reveal to you through them?*

3. Respond to God.

After pausing & reflecting a second time, transition your group to respond to God about their experience quietly by themselves (3-5mins). Some people may find it helpful to journal their responses.

Prompts to help you respond - *How do you feel about what God is revealing to you? Do you feel thankful? Respond in praise. Are you concerned? Bring your petitions. Is God asking you to do something? Discuss your next step with Him. If the text has brought something else to mind, talk to God about that.*

4. Rest.

Finally, invite everyone to sit silently in God's loving presence before moving on (2 minutes). Allow any revelation you have received during this time to sink deeper into your soul.

Once this time has come to a close, ask if anyone would like to share anything they received or experienced during that time and give space for people to respond. (There is no pressure for people to share, but it may be helpful to remind the group that those who felt like they didn't receive anything from God can be blessed by the revelation received by others.)

IDEA 1

Misunderstanding #1: The When Question – “Lord, are you at this time?” Jesus kindly explains to the disciples that this is not for them to know. We don’t get to know the timing question. Only God is big enough to know the future and not have it mess up the present. We’re not that big or wise. We don’t get to know the future. He does, so we have to trust him.

What do you presume is the *necessity* in Jesus withholding the timing of ‘restoring the kingdom?’

Why is it so difficult for us not to know the future of God’s plan and to trust Him?

IDEA 2

Misunderstanding #2: The What Question – “Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” They thought the story was about Israel, but in fact, Jesus’ plan was for the whole world. They are to be witnesses in (1) Jerusalem - their town; (2) Judea - the next town over; (3) Samaria - people who live close to you who are not like you; (3) Ends of the Earth - the whole world. Jesus, what are you going to do for us? I’m going to send you to the world with my message and love.

What does it mean to you that Jesus wants to use all of us to spread His gospel message to the ends of the earth?

Have you ever wondered about the significance of Jesus, including not just Jerusalem but also Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth? How does that relate to your life and your role as a witness?

Which of John's stories about what SAC has been able to do across the nations stood out to you, and why?

Take a moment to reflect. How do you believe God is calling you to be His witness? Does your heart yearn for your Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, or the ends of the earth?

PRACTICE THIS WEEK

Misunderstanding #3: The Who Question— “Lord, are you...?” Lord, what are you going to do? He responds with three “you’s” coming back at them. Yes, I will do something. I will empower you with my Holy Spirit. You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses. (Acts 1:8) We are His plan – you and me – a Holy Spirit strengthened form of us. We not only bear his name, but we bear his fruit.

What do you think the passage means when it says, ‘You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you?’

Do you have any initial feelings of fear, discomfort, apathy, or excitement, and passion that God would want you to participate in His plan?

What do you believe is your next step in how God wants you to participate in bringing the good news to the ‘ends of the earth?’