



it starts with one

IT STARTS WITH ONE, PART 2: CHANGING YOUR WORLD

Have you ever wondered if your life is really making a difference? It's something we all think about from time to time, and the question is rooted in a desire that was hardwired in us by God. We are the church, and the Holy Spirit has empowered us with the job of spreading God's Kingdom here on earth. So what are we going to do about it?

BIG IDEA: We make a difference in our world when we tell others about Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you were to go live on a deserted island and could carry only one thing with you, what would it be?
2. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Acts 1:1-11.*

In my first book I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit. 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.

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. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." 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?" He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. 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."

After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. "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)

3. According to Acts 1:1-3, what was the purpose of the Gospel of Like? Compare these verses to Luke 1:1-4.
4. Jesus told the disciples to wait for the promised Holy Spirit. Do you think the disciples knew what this meant? Do you know?
5. In Acts 1:6, the disciples showed that they were confused about what Jesus had come to do. They thought he was going to build a physical kingdom and push out their oppressors. Instead he was building a unifying spiritual Kingdom. In response, Jesus gave them a mission. According to verse 8, what is this mission?

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."

Acts 1:8 (NLT)

6. In Acts 1:8, they will become witnesses. What is your definition of witness?
7. Would someone observing your life know that this your mission? Why or why not? What is one thing you can do this week to obey Jesus' final command to His disciples?
8. Just like the disciples, we sometimes get confused about the mission of Jesus. What are some ways you have seen people get confused about what Jesus came to do? What are some ways you have been confused or misguided about the Jesus mission?

It's natural to have a list of things we need. Often times we have a list of not only things we need, but a list of things we really, really want. Many people begin to attend church because of what is needed in their life: freedom from an addiction, healing in a marriage, an inspiring environment for a child, and that is a good place to start. However, as we grow in our relationship with Jesus, we are called to move from consumer to follower.

9. What motivated you to attend church as a child? What motivates you as an adult? Has your understanding of church changed over time? If so, how? What are some of the words you may have used to describe church or Christianity on various points on your journey?
10. What, if anything, keeps you from being fully passionate about being Jesus' witness?
11. Is there anyone in your life to whom you feel God is specifically calling you to be a witness?

GOING DEEPER

1. How do you make big decisions? What are some of the weirdest ways in which you have made a big decision in your past?
2. According to verses 13-14, what did the disciples do while waiting for the fulfillment of Jesus' promise?
3. Sometimes it is hard to just wait. So it was with Peter. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Acts 1:12-26.*

Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying. Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the Zealot), and Judas (son of James). They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

During this time, when about 120 believers were together in one place, Peter stood up and addressed them. "Brothers," he said, "the Scriptures had to be fulfilled concerning Judas, who guided those who arrested Jesus. This was predicted long ago by the Holy Spirit, speaking through King David. Judas was one of us and shared in the ministry with us." (Judas had bought a field with the money he received for his treachery. Falling headfirst there, his body split open, spilling out all his intestines. The news of his death spread to all the people of Jerusalem, and they gave the place the Aramaic name Akeldama, which means "Field of Blood.") Peter continued, "This was written in the book of Psalms, where it says, 'Let his home become desolate, with no one living in it.' It also says, 'Let someone else take his position.' "So now we must choose a replacement for Judas from among the men who were with us the entire time we were traveling with the Lord Jesus—from the time he was baptized by John until the day he was taken from us. Whoever is chosen will join us as a witness of Jesus' resurrection." So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they all prayed, "O Lord, you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen as an apostle to replace Judas in this ministry, for he has deserted us and gone where he belongs." Then they cast lots, and Matthias was selected to become an apostle with the other eleven. Acts 1:12-26 (NLT)

4. Instead of waiting, Peter led the eleven disciples to choose a replacement of Judas, even though Jesus did not tell them to do so. Why is it so difficult to wait on God? Have you ever felt like you forced something through that might not have been in God's plan?

In the Old Testament, one of the ways God's people would determine what God would want would be to cast lots—the closest modern practice to casting lots is likely flipping a coin (Proverbs 16:33).

5. Verse 26 is the last time a lot is cast in the entire Bible. Why is that so?

The New Testament nowhere instructs Christians to use a method similar to casting lots to help with decision-making. Now that we have the completed Word of God and the Holy Spirit to guide us, there is no reason to be using games of chance to make decisions. The Word, the Spirit, and prayer are sufficient for discerning God's will today—not casting lots, rolling dice, or flipping a coin. If Peter would have just waited a bit longer, the Holy Spirit would have indwelt him in Acts 2 and led him to the person God would want to replace Judas.

6. Matthias is never mentioned again in scripture or Christian history, so many think Judas' replacement should have been the Apostle Paul, who wrote 2/3rd's of the New Testament (*Paul calls himself an apostle in Romans 1:1; 11:13; 1 Corinthians 1:1; 9:1-2; 15:9; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 1 Timothy 1:1; 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:1; 11*). How do verses 21-22 define an apostle?

THINK ABOUT IT

God wants you to be a part of the team that will spread the kingdom of God to the ends of the earth. It's a huge adventure, and He has a job for you. Are you willing to take the plunge and share His good news throughout the world?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

As a group, practice being His witnesses with each other and within your spheres of influence. Discuss practical ways that you can share the love of Christ in your relationships this week. If you feel comfortable, and if time allows, share your testimony with one another.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

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.” Acts 1:8