

**The Church is Born**  
Growth Group Discussion Guide  
Acts 1:1-11

**Intro questions**

- In the brainstorm exercise during this week's sermon info, what words, images or phrases first came to mind when you thought of, "The Church?" If you were not present for the sermon, what first comes to mind when you hear, "The Church?"
- We're starting a new series, looking at the origins of the church in the Book of Acts. Why do you think it is important to understand the birth of the church?
- Take a moment to pray, asking for God's Spirit to lead your discussion.

**1. Read Luke 1:1-4, then answer the following question.**

- This prologue to Luke's Gospel also serves, in a way, as a prelude to the book of Acts as well (since the two books actually make up one longer book). Why does it matter that what Luke is writing has been carefully checked out with eyewitnesses of the events?
- **Now read Luke 24:36-53**, to get an idea of where Luke has left off before resuming in Acts. How might you describe the mood and mindset of the disciples at the beginning of Acts?

**2. Read Acts 1:1-11, then discuss the following.**

- What is the significance of the fact that during the 40 days after his resurrection, Jesus gave his followers "many convincing proofs" that he was alive, including eating with them?
- Why did Jesus tell his followers to wait for the promised Holy Spirit before launching out on their mission?
- In v. 6, why do the disciples ask Jesus a question about restoring the kingdom to Israel? What is the connection between this question about the kingdom of God and the promise of the Holy Spirit?
- What is the significance of Jesus' answer in v. 7?

**3. In Acts 1:8, we see the purpose, power, and destiny of the church. Take some time to unpack and apply these three things.**

- In this verse, we see the **common purpose** that draws us together as the church: **being witnesses of Jesus**.
  - What comes to mind when you think of "being a witness?"
  - How do you feel about sharing your experience of Jesus with other people?
  - What is one thing that you could tell someone else about, that Jesus has done in your life?
  - What are some other, lesser tasks or endeavors that could potentially distract us from this common purpose?
  - How might our church suffer by being sidelined from this purpose? How do you think we're doing in this area?

- In Acts 1:8, we also see our **common power source: the Holy Spirit**.
  - If you have read Acts before, try to think of some examples in the early church of ways that the Holy Spirit acted as the power source for the mission of the church. (We'll see some in coming weeks as well).
  - Have you ever tried to do something for God without praying or seeking his power for the task? What was the outcome?
  - In what ways have you experienced the Spirit empowering you, or others close to you?
  - What aspects of our common purpose seem daunting to you?
    - How can the Holy Spirit's power address these areas?
- In Acts 1:8, we also see our **common destiny: success**.
  - What is the specific success that Jesus says will happen through his witnesses?
  - Is there any community, people group, or specific relationship where it seems impossible for the good news to penetrate?
    - How do the words of Jesus here change your perspective on that "mission field?"
  - How might it change your outlook on serving Jesus, if you know that in the long haul, we are guaranteed to be successful?

#### 4. Concluding Application

- How does this initial look at the essence of being the church speak most to your life today?
- What practical steps do you think the Holy Spirit is prompting you to take in response to this study and discussion?

#### 5. Prayer

- Spend some time praying for the Spirit's leading and power in the mission Jesus has given us, as well as in the practical action steps that were shared.
- Take time to share and pray for other needs in your group members' lives.