



SERIES: ACTS - WHEN THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN
MESSAGE TITLE: FIRST THINGS FIRST

SPEAKER: BRAD WILLIAMS
DATE: SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2020

MESSAGE SUMMARY

BIBLICAL TEXT(S): Acts 1:12-26

The second half of Acts chapter 1 gives us a glimpse into what these disciples did while they were waiting for Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit to be fulfilled. First of all, the disciples obeyed Jesus' direction. He had told them to go to Jerusalem and wait, so that is what they did. Though God's love is unconditional, there is a connection between being obedient and an outpouring of God's Spirit.

While they were waiting, the disciples gathered and prayed. Throughout history, there has been a connection between prayer and powerful moves of God. We don't coerce God into doing what we want when we pray, but our prayers and openness to God's movement invites him to work in our lives. The disciples also acted. There were some choices that they felt empowered to make, even while they were waiting on the fulfillment of Jesus' promise. We can continue to do these three things as we wait on what God will do in our lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. These can help your group understand and apply the teaching more profitably

LEAN IN

These are icebreakers and warm ups, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What activities have you been doing outside in the last few weeks as the weather has warmed up?
2. Have you used your time in quarantine to develop any new skills or start any new habits? If so, what are they?
3. Have you ever used an unconventional method to make a decision (like flipping a coin)? What happened? How did that turn out?
4. Last time we met, we talked about [whatever you talked about]. Has anyone had a chance to put that lesson into practice? Has it has an impact on your life in any way?

LOOK DOWN

These are questions about the Bible passage(s) and observations about what's been read. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. Where did the disciples go after Jesus had ascended to heaven? What is the significance of the place they were staying? Read over the accounts of the Last Supper if you need a hint. :-)

cont.

CONTINUED:

2. According to verses 13-14, who was included in the gathering? What do you notice about that list? What did these followers of Jesus spend their time doing?
3. Who eventually stood up and addressed the group? What did he claim about the Scriptures? What course of action did he suggest?
4. What happened to Judas? How did that fulfill the Scriptures? It may be helpful to go back and read the two Psalms that Peter mentions to get a fuller view.
5. How did Jesus' followers decide who would take Jesus' place? Who was ultimately chosen? Why do you think we never hear about him again?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. After Jesus ascended, the disciples went back to the Upper Room where they had spent their last night with Jesus. What are some examples of how people go back to places that are significant to them? Do you think going back to a significant place is helpful? Why or why not?
2. When people are waiting for something (whether it's just waiting in line or waiting for something big) what kinds of things do they do? What kinds of things have you seen people do while they wait that are helpful? What things have you observed that are unhelpful or even unhealthy?
3. How do people (in the world and in the church) think of the Bible today? Where do they think it comes from? How does that compare with Peter's statement in this passage?
4. What is an example in our culture of someone "getting their due" through non-legal circumstances, similar to what happened to Judas? Do you think God is at work in these circumstances? Why or why not? Is the idea that people who have done wrong reap the consequences of their actions encouraging to you? Why or why not?
5. How do people (in the church and outside of it) make leadership decisions today? Do you think these methods are better, worse, or the same as the method the disciples used? Why?

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. Is there a place that is significant to your life that you like to go back to? Does that place have a positive or negative impact on you? How has God used that place in your life?

cont.

CONTINUED:

2. What kinds of things do you do while you're waiting? How does this passage from Acts encourage, inspire, or challenge you about how you wait?
3. How have you experienced the Holy Spirit through your reading of the Scriptures? How has God spoken to you as you've read the Bible? How does the Holy Spirit's role in the writing of the Scriptures encourage, inspire, and challenge you?
4. Theologians tell us that what happened to Judas demonstrates God's justice. What is most challenging to you as you think through his justice and how he works in the world? What about his justice encourages you?
5. Do you struggle to make decisions in your life? What is most challenging to you in that process? How does the disciples' process for picking Matthias impact your thoughts about making decisions?

LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. The disciples prayed while they were waiting on Jesus to fulfill his promise to them. What promises are you waiting on God to fulfill right now? How can your group support you in your waiting through prayer or otherwise?
2. How can you invite the Holy Spirit into your reading of the Scriptures this week? Tell your group your ideas so they can encourage you and keep you accountable?
3. Are you needing to make a decision about something right now? How can your group pray for you and encourage you as you seek to make this decision?

Thanks to Ashleigh Rich and the ADT team this week for notes and questions, as well as Charissa Burns (@charissaburnsstudio on Instagram) for her illustrated notes, which normally appear on the following page.

When the World turned upside-down

Acts 1:12-26 "First things first"

5-3-2020
B4 Church
-Brad Williams

The connection between OBEDIENCE & OUTPOURING

- God's love is unconditional (it doesn't depend on obedience)
- There is a connection between obeying and a move of God.
- obedience to God creates space for the Holy Spirit to create something new
- but obedience does affect our relationship with God.
- When we obey, there is more trust which means more freedom!
- If there's something God has been asking of you... pray & obey - move on it.

The prayful pursuit of GOD preceding a POWERFUL MOVE OF GOD

- Obey, then pursuit God! leaning into pray and spending time with God to truly know Him.
- Prayer: sitting with Jesus, listening to Jesus, talking with Jesus
- Having your heart aligned & touched by God.
- PRAYER COMES BEFORE THIS POWERFUL MOVE OF GOD!

The FAITH we have "IN THE MEAN TIME"

- Difference between certainty & confidence
 - certainty is having a detailed blueprint
 - confidence is knowing God's heart, having a sense of he wants & discerning.
- Waiting isn't doing nothing.
- Waiting is moving forward with a heart aligned to Christ's heart.