

STUDY GUIDE

Reading for week 1: Acts 1



WHATS THE STORY?

After Jesus' resurrection, he instructs his followers to await the promised Holy Spirit in Jerusalem, and tells them that they will spread from there to the ends of the Earth. The whole community waits together for God to act.

LECTIO DEVINA

Prepare: Find a calm and quiet place to read and absorb the passage.

Read: Read through the passage. Listen for any words or phrases that jump out and listen for what God has to say.

Reflect: Try to understand what God could be saying to you through this passage.

Respond: Journal or pray to God, communicating about what you think God was telling you through Scripture.

Rest: Spend time contemplating, allowing God to work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do you think the early church felt about waiting for the Spirit to come?
- Why might the disciples still be expecting the restoration of Israel as God's main goal?



FAMILY STUDY

Discuss: How did Jesus appear to his followers after His death?

Who were Jesus' followers waiting for in Jerusalem?

What are the similarities between how Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit and how we are led by the Holy Spirit?

A Deeper Look

Luke continues the story in volume two of his writings with the same introduction to a mysterious Theophilus. Recapping what he had originally written about in their first communication, Luke adds an interesting note as he summarizes Jesus' life and teachings, one that announces a main theme that runs through his second volume. Writing "...after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen..." (1:2), Luke says that Jesus and His teachings were Holy Spirit inspired in the same way Luke writes of Christ's followers walking and teaching with inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Luke then lets the reader know that there were 40 days of Jesus' teachings about the Kingdom of God, something that likely carries through into the Disciples' teachings of the Kingdom post- resurrection. Even within this context, the Disciples are mainly hung up on their home nation of Israel being the main benefactor of this resurrection power. Jesus patiently corrects them saying, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (1:8) This instruction to Christ's followers is the same sentiment that God has had since the beginning. To "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it." (Gen 1:28) And also sentiments like Abraham's promise, "...and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed..." (Gen 22:18)

In the latter half of the chapter we gain insight into two things: first, how Peter used scripture from the Old Testament (Ps 65:25 & Ps 109:8) and how the early church would go on to interpret the Old Testament through Jesus and their present events. And second, who will replace Judas among the Twelve. One question we may have is who are these characters we are being introduced to, and who exactly belonged to this earliest community of Christ-followers?