

Easter Encounters (5 of 5)
Small Group Discussion Questions

PUBLIC WORSHIP DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The global pandemic COVID-19 has forced us to adjust and adapt how we do church and stay connected to one another as a congregation. We're not closed as a church, we're just doing church differently! So, please stay connected to the body at Grantham Church. Join our congregation for worship in-person with restrictions or online at 10:30 am each Sunday morning via our Grantham Church YouTube Channel. For more information, please go to the [Grantham Church Live](#) page at our website.

As usual, the sermons will be posted to the [recent sermons page](#) on our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for staying connected with us!

Sunday, May 16th 2021



Sermon Title: The Commission and Ascension of Jesus

Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11

Sermon Focus: The gospels record the last two encounters with the risen Jesus to be when he gave his disciples the Great Commission and when he ascended to heaven. Why are these encounters so significant? And what do they mean for us today? Listen as Pastor David shares his reasons for believing in the resurrection of Jesus and why followers of Jesus must make disciples and live as if Christ is king and coming again.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group in person, by phone, or video call. Use the following questions to help *guide* your small group discussion:

1. Pastor David began his sermon by briefly listing and explaining 7 reasons for believing in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Discuss each of these as a group. Which of these do you find most compelling for your own faith?
 1. Reliability of the NT
 2. Testimony of Eyewitnesses
 3. Multiple Attestation
 4. The Empty Tomb
 5. Resurrection Appearances
 6. Growth of the Early Church
 7. The Credibility of Miracles
2. Read Acts 1:1-11 together. What are your first thoughts about this passage? What gets your attention as you read/hear it? What questions does it raise for you? Also, how does it encourage or inspire you as a follower of Jesus?
3. As we can see in Acts 1:6, the disciples were still clinging to a nationalistic understanding of the kingdom of God. But Jesus corrects them in Acts 1:8. Why do you think it is so hard for us to exchange nationalism for a Kingdom that transcends all border, boundaries, allegiances, etc.? Also, why does nationalism and pledging allegiance to a flag impede upon our ability to follow Jesus?
4. The Barna Group's 2018 study found that 51% of Christians in America had never heard of the Great Commission. Does this surprise you? Why do you think this is the case? Also, what then should it look like for a church to have the Great Commission at the heart of their mission? Give specific examples.
5. Pastor David said that the ascension of Jesus is about God the Father elevating Jesus to the Oval Office of the universe. He is reigning and ruling from heaven, but it doesn't look like God "controlling" every aspect of the world. Why do you think it's difficult for us to accept that Jesus is reigning and ruling from heaven? Also, in what ways might Christians be "staring up into the sky" (Acts 1:11) instead of being busy furthering the Great Commission and the Kingdom?
6. What has been your greatest takeaway from the Easter Encounters series?