

Acts 1:6-11 - The Ascension Outline and Notes

1. Greet one another, begin with prayer, and read Acts 1:6-11.

2. Remind the class about the direction by Jesus to wait in Jerusalem for the Spirit's arrival.

3. Discuss the disciples' continuing inability to grasp the mission of Jesus in Acts 1:6-7.

- Even with more teaching they continue to think of an earthly rule and reign
- Jesus quickly cuts off this line of inquiry (as He does in the Gospel accounts)
- Why do you think the disciples are still so clueless? How have we been similarly clueless about Christian faith and practice?

4. Discuss what the Spirit will empower in Acts 1:8.

- Power is promised with a focused aim: to be witnesses
- The witness will start locally, then move regionally, nationally, and globally
- Why do we need power specifically for being witnesses of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ? Can't we do it ourselves? What about witness makes it completely dependent upon the Holy Spirit?
- How does this ability to bear witness of God's good news in Jesus reveal itself?
- Why is the four-tiered structure of local, regional, national, and global witness important? How do we see this witness being made known today?

5. Discuss the Ascension of Jesus in Acts 1:9-11.

- Jesus ascends to the right hand of the Father
- Angels promise Jesus will return in like manner
- The Ascension reveals four crucial emphases: 1) the coming of the Holy Spirit (Jesus said the Spirit would come when He left—John 16:5-11), 2) the divinity of Christ (at the Father's right hand), 3) the humanity of Christ (His resurrected, changed body), and 4) the reign and rule of Christ (the new heaven and earth)
- Why does the Ascension receive little emphasis within most of American Christianity? What makes it off-putting to us?
- In today's climate, how are 1) Jesus' divinity, 2) Jesus' humanity, and 3) Jesus' reign and rule often deemphasized at best and rejected/denied at worst? Both outside Christianity and inside the church? How are all three items absolutely necessary for living the Christian life? How do we experience them?

6. Close in prayer.