

Sunday, April 24, 2022 - "Church? - Week 1 - The Church: Act 1" - Doug Kempton

Key Passages: Acts 1:6-14, Romans 1:21-22, Amos 5:21-23, Revelation 3:20

- Feel free to read the passage(s) out loud as a group
- Allow the group to share freely about what stood out to them from the passage or from Sunday's message

#### Main Ideas

- What is the new normal for church?
- The last decade has seen a major shift in culture and hostility towards biblical values (Romans 1:21-22)
- Baseline understandings
  - capital C church = The whole church, the called out ones
  - lowercase c church = this particular body of believers (Grace)
  - If it's true for an individual/group it's true and applicable for us as a church (we are called to something unique as Grace Community Church)
- Acts 1 - A few observations
  - Jesus' last words to the disciples: You will receive power (Holy Spirit) THEN you will be my witnesses
    - It's only possible to be a witness with the power of the Holy Spirit
    - It is humbling and comforting (Luke 24:29)
    - We can be deceived by emotion and entertainment
    - Amos 5:21-23
  - There is a need for UNITY
    - Unity in early church was remarkable
    - Our unity is our witness
  - There is a need for PRAYER
    - They devoted themselves to prayer
    - God has called us to a culture of prayer
    - We want the easy way BUT we have to commit to doing it as a discipline
  - Prayer and unity are prerequisites for the Holy Spirit to move in power
- 3 immediate steps
  - 1) Set aside time daily to pray (maybe God is asking for more from you in this season)
  - 2) Join us for pre-service prayer (8:30 & 10:30 in the chapel)
  - 3) Set your alarm for 9:30 Monday through Friday and pray for Grace at that time
- Revelation 3:20
  - Prayer = Jesus coming and dwelling in our hearts
  - Jesus moves us through prayer

Questions (Feel free to use all of these, some of these, or none of these)

1. What has your experience with church been like?
2. How have you experienced being empowered by the Holy Spirit to be a witness for Jesus?
3. How are you doing with prayer? How is God calling you to more?
4. What does it mean for you to be devoted to prayer?
5. How have you experienced unity in church? What makes unity difficult? How can we grow?
6. What is God inviting you into as a result of this passage or sermon?

**\*\*15 Minutes with God Reading Plan-**

**Mon: John 6 Tues: John 7 Wed: John 8 Thurs: John 9 Fri: John 10**

**Songs from the weekend: [Rest On Us - *Maverick City*] - [Jesus We Love You - Bethel Music] - [Jesus At The Center - Israel Houghton] - [Surrounded (Fight My Battles) - *Upperroom*]**