

Week 2: Jerusalem: Right where you are

Acts 1:8 (NIV) "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."

Introduction: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step" (Chinese Proverb)

Often our natural tendency is to want to be at the finish line, or move on to the next big thing. The young child can't wait to grow older. The single person can't wait to be married. The married person can't wait to have kids. Parents of teenagers can't wait till the kids leave home! Or it might be that we think we *should* be further along than we are: the beginning piano student is frustrated that they can't play Beethoven, the new member of the basketball team is disappointed that they didn't score any points; the first time preacher wonders why they didn't see a huge revival.

The reality is that nearly everything we do in life is a process or a journey. We have to crawl before we can walk. We have to learn the alphabet before we can write sentences, before we can write a book.

And God in His grace calls us to follow Him and be a part of what He is doing in the community of believers in the same way. He has great things in store for us as we follow Him, He wants to transform our lives and use us to transform the whole world. But He always starts with where we are right now. God's mission to transform the whole world starts with you and me, right where we are.

Insider Story:

Ask someone in your congregation to share their story. Look for someone who:

- Is grappling with how to share their faith and the message of Jesus to a family member or close friend.
- Can share about their hesitations, and joy of leading a friend/family member to faith (are they in the congregation too?).

Story 1: Acts 2:14-33 - the day of Pentecost

Acts 2:15, 32 (NIV) "These people are not drunk ... God has raised this Jesus to life and we are all witnesses of it"

- **Key point:** the people nearby noticed what was happening to the disciples, and Peter answered their questions, pointing them to what Jesus was doing. The fact that this happened to them as a group of people, made the statement all the more powerful.
- **Application:**
 - Who are the people who are close enough to see what is happening in our lives and therefore already have an opportunity to ask us about our experience?
 - How will we explain it to them?



Story 2: John 1:40-42 - Andrew

John 1:41-2 (NIV) "The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah." And he brought him to Jesus.

- **Key point:** when we meet the living Jesus, we want the people we know and love to meet Him too
- **Application:**
 - What is unique about you – your interests, vocation, opportunities, experience – that places you in the middle of people (another community) right now who you can point to Jesus?

Conclusions:

- For those who are following Jesus, encouragement to love those already in their lives and trust Jesus to be seen in you, being prepared to share when they give you opportunity.
- For the church as a whole, who are the people that your church already has contact with on a regular basis and how can you continue to love and serve them so they see Jesus in and through you and want to know more?

Take Home Questions

- Reflect on your own Christian journey, how has a relationship with Jesus transformed your life?
- How does this ongoing transformation affect your interaction with others – both within the church and with those outside?
- Who are the people that God has placed in your life now with whom you can be building more intentional relationships?

