

empowered

----- ORDINARY PEOPLE. EXTRAORDINARY GOD. -----

Small Group Study #1

Passion and Power

Pray and ask God to speak to you as a group, then read Acts 1:1-14 out loud together.

1. Our scene in Acts 1 is filled with wonder and emotion. Imagine what it must have been like for the disciples to see their Savior Jesus ascend into heaven! These men and women were witnesses to the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Their world was turned upside down by the love and power of God. How have you witnessed God's love and power in your life?
2. In verse 6 we see the desire of the disciples to see the kingdom come in their homeland "as it is in heaven". They were eager to see God change their world for the better. They wanted to know when this would happen in its fullness. Instead of giving them an exact answer, Jesus tells them that they are to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. Sometimes we can pray and ask God to change the circumstances in our world, only to find out that He is empowering us to be that change. What does it mean for you to partner with God to bring change in your neighborhoods and circles of influence—as individuals, and also as a group?

Read Acts 2:1-21 out loud together.

1. When Jesus sent His followers into the world to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8) and make disciples (Matthew 28:19) He knew that we could not do it in our own power or strength. He promised to send His Holy Spirit to empower us to do this great work. Sometimes we forget this. How does it free you to know that "God does not call the equipped. He equips the called."?
2. In verse 1 we see that the disciples were all together in one place. They were obediently waiting on God to fill them. They were filled with hearts of expectation for what God would do. God desires to empower us, but He will not do it unless we are willing vessels to receive Him. Are you eager and ready to be filled with the Holy Spirit? What are some of the things that can hold us back from desiring the Spirit's fullness?
3. Read verses 17 - 18 again. What stands out to you? Since Jesus ascended we have been living in "the last days." How do you see the Holy Spirit at work in the world?

Prayer

Ask God to "pour out" His Spirit on your group in a new and fresh way. Pray earnestly for the power from God to be witnesses to the world and "speak a language" the world can understand.

Consider committing to pray together as a group, each time you assemble, for friends and family members who do not know Christ.

Optional Small Group Worship Elements

This year at Bethel we are encouraging our small groups to go deeper. One of the ways your group can do that is to incorporate new worship practices into your small group time together. Kevin Rietema has provided some additional elements for your consideration.

Maybe your group can sing together for the first time? Perhaps you can spend more time in Scripture and in prayer together? However the Spirit leads you, we hope you will be blessed by this “bonus content.”

Where Do I Go From Here? — Acts 1:1-14

Song Ideas - Holy Holy Holy // Revelation Song // Build Your Kingdom Here // Hear The Call of the Kingdom

Additional Scripture Reading

- Ephesians 4:1-6 & 1 Peter 3:15-16

Prayer:

Almighty God, be gracious to us and bless us and make your face to shine upon us, that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations. Empower all the peoples to praise you, O God, that the nations may be glad and sing for joy. For you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. Enable all the peoples to praise you, O God, for the earth has yielded its increase and you, our God, have blessed us. We ask that you will continue to bless us so that all the ends of the earth will revere you. Amen.

Receiving God's Power — Acts 2:1-21

Song Ideas - Mighty to Save // Holy Spirit

Scripture Reading

- 2 Peter 1:3-8

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, after giving your life on the cross, you entered the glory of the Father. Allow all people to share in your risen life. In you, Jesus, God made a new covenant with us. You are with us always, until the end of time. Jesus, you appeared to your disciples after your passion. Strengthen our faith by your presence in our midst. Jesus, you promised the Holy Spirit to the apostles. May the Spirit of consolation renew our faithfulness to you. Jesus, you sent your apostles to proclaim good news to the ends of the earth. May the Holy Spirit make us witnesses to your love. Amen.