



Approaching God

Read this portion of Psalm 1 and begin with an opening prayer

Blessed is the man...whose delight is in the law of the Lord - on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. (Psalm 1:1,3)

As you open your time today in prayer, think about the images that the Psalmist uses to describe the effects that God's Word has on the person who spends time "meditating" on scripture. What do these images represent? What desires do these images stir in you? What would you want to ask of the Lord this morning concerning your time with Him in His Word this Fall? Take a minute or two to talk to God about these things as you open in prayer.

Acts 1:1-11

Passage Introduction:

When Jesus prays for his disciples in John 17, he asks that the Father send them out into the world, and that one of the results of this missional sending would be "so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them." (John 17:13). Jesus is showing us in this prayer that we were made for mission. The book of Acts helps us to see that when we are followers of Jesus, we are, in fact caught up in something much bigger than ourselves. As Christians, we are caught up in a worldwide movement - a passing on of a message that has been transforming people's lives in every country on the face of the earth for thousands of years. We get to share in the thrill of being laborers in the ongoing, outgoing work of the risen Christ!

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

Use the space in the margin to jot down notes, or themes/ideas that stand out as important.

Acts 1:1-11 - 1 In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, **2** until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. **3** He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. **4** And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; **5** for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." **6** So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" **7** He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. **8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you,

and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." **9** And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. **10** And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, **11** and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Questions for Reflection & Meditation

- What does the phrase Luke uses in vs. 1 "all that Jesus began to do and teach" lead you to expect about the book of Acts and what might happen in the narrative?
- How would you describe where the disciples are at in their thinking, emotions, and desires in this scene? What signs are there in the passage that indicate that the disciples might not yet understand Jesus' plans and purposes?
- What are some things you observe about the the plans Jesus has for his disciples? What are the implications (if any) for you of Jesus' instructions to his disciples?

Key Takeaway:

As you read today's passage, what are 1 or 2 main takeaways that you wrote down in the margins? How would you briefly summarize your observations and meditations for today?

Close in Prayer:

Thank God for the ongoing work of Jesus Christ in this world. Thank him in particular for the gift of his Holy Spirit. Ask that his Spirit would give you greater confidence and joy to be sent out right where you are through your study of his word this year.