

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of August 1st, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: What We Take Seriously

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your laugh? Why?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

I. Commitment to the Community of Faith is Powerful

- What does your faith community look like? Who do you trust in your life to move you towards the things of God?
- What is your level of commitment to your faith community right now? How is God calling you towards deepening that commitment?
- What things from your past experiences make it hard for you to go all in with your faith community? If there's nothing holding you back, share what you did to overcome those obstacles with the group as an encouragement.
- God does miraculous things when we're committed to the community of faith. What amazing things have you witnessed from being a part of a faith community?

II. Deception is Always Destructive

- What are some situations or circumstances where you've allowed deception to take place, either personally or to someone else? Why? What do you think God would have told you to do?
- God takes deception very seriously. Take turns reading the following: **Exodus 20:16, Deuteronomy 25:16, Proverbs 6:16-17, Proverbs 19:22, and Psalm 101:7.** How do these verses speak to and challenge your idea of lying or being deceptive? What do you think

about telling “white lies”?

- Pastor Mike shared the quote, “You are NOT required to live someone else’s Christianity.” Have you ever felt a pressure to do this? If so, share how you were pressured and how you dealt with it.
- Where in your life do you feel a tension between giving 100% to God or holding back to protect or preserve yourself?

III. We Need a Healthy Fear of God

- Pastor Mike shared that a healthy fear of God is to have a healthy awe, reverence, worshipful heart, deep sense of love, and true devotion to God. Is or was your understanding of fearing God different from this? How has your understanding of this now changed?
- Where do you see the loss of the fear of God in our culture? What about in the church?
- Where and how is the fear of God evident in your life?
- What areas of your life (i.e. relationships, work, thoughts, etc.) lack the fear of God? What changes do you need to make so you can start walking in the fear of the Lord?

Act On It

Encourage: Being a part of a faith community, a group that’s committed to each other and to Jesus, brings so much power and blessing. Needs are met, miracles take place, and the Kingdom of God grows just as we’re called to do. Commitment grows the Kingdom and anything misaligned with that, grieves God. Deception is tempting because it brings relief and satisfaction; however, it’s always short-lived, it hurts, and most importantly, God HATES it. Deception hurts others, it hurts us, and it separates us from God. God takes this VERY seriously, which means we need to take it seriously, too! Let’s be led through our fear of God, through our reverence,

awe and devotion to God, and stop letting the fear of man, comparison and offense guide our steps.

Ask: Ask for God to challenge you to go deeper in your commitment to your faith community, to show you what next steps He has for you. Pray for your commitment to be oriented on your personal relationship with Christ, not by fear or comparison. Pray for boldness and ask for transformation to enter any areas of deception in your life. Pray for God's desires to become your desires.

Challenge: Do the things that you take seriously look like things that God would take seriously, too? Increase your devotion to God so your desires can start aligning with God's desires. Repent and ask for forgiveness of the sin that is separating you from His presence, and bring it honestly to God. Step up your prayer life. Set aside time, engage in the 21 Days of Prayer with our church this month, and reignite your fear of God.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Lord, we thank you for the faith community of people you've surrounded us with that provides love, encouragement, support, and correction when we need it. Thank you for your love, grace and redemption. Thank you for your word, that we never have to question your nature or where you stand on issues that you know we deal with daily. Nothing is a secret or surprise to you. We repent and lay our secrets and struggles at your feet. Let us come away from this message with a renewed and healthy fear of you. Lead us to a place of repentance and deeper devotion to you. Move our hearts toward humility and surrender. Speak into our lives, hearts and minds so our actions and words are motivated not by what we want, but out of the love and reverence we have for you. Help us desire closeness with you, to be passionate about the love you have for us. You love us and only want what's good for us, and we honor you. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of July 25th, 2021

Sermon: Focused

Speaker: Pastor Darren Nibbelink - Lead Pastor of Focus314 Church

Icebreaker

- What translation of the bible do you read and why?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

I. Distractions Lead to Accidents

- What normally distracts you when you are focused and how do you handle it? Is it a struggle to get rid of it?
- What steps can you take to mitigate away from those distractions?

II. Where is Your Focus?

- Pastor Darren shared that our focus determines our destiny, what are you focused on and where is that path leading you?
- Take a moment and reflect on what the main influence of your focus has been. Is it God inspired or self-serving?

III. Traps we Fall Into

Our Focus is on the Good Life

Our Focus is on the Here and Now

- What is one thing that you've been thinking will make a huge difference in your life? Why will this make a difference?
- How do you define the "Good Life?"
- What is the definition of the world's "Good Life" and what is the definition of the Scriptural "Good Life?"

VI. The Good Life is Never Good Enough?

- Think of a time where you worked so hard to achieve or obtain something that you thought would change your life. What was the outcome?
- **Read Matthew 6:33**, how does this apply to your life? How would you share this with someone who is struggling in their focus?

VII. What you are Focused on is what you will find?

- Pastor Darren said “What you are Focused on is what you will find”, for someone on the outside looking into your life, what would they say your focus is?
- What has kept you from living the life that Christ has called you into?

Act On It

Encourage:

“Consider how precious a soul must be that both God and the Devil are after it.” -Charles Spurgeon. God uniquely made each of us and loved us so, that he sent his only Son to die for us even while we were still sinners. We are all born into sin, we are all born into the hand of the Devil, BUT GOD’s everlasting, ever pursuing, undefeatable love reached out and made a way for us when there was no way and now we all have the free gift to accept Christ into our hearts. For the word says that all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. God made it so easy and yet we make that so difficult to accept. God loves us and wants us, we simply have to believe and accept His love.

Ask:

Pray that God shifts your focus from matters most to you to what matters most to Him. Ask for help eliminating any distractions. Pray for a spirit of contentment, to be happy with what we are already getting from God instead of what we are lacking from the world.

Challenge:

Let's take steps to eliminate distractions. Find an accountability partner within your group to help. Try writing down your top 5 biggest distractions. Then write down what situations lead you to fall into these areas. Finally,

identify what you need to do to keep you from pulling the trigger on each of these areas.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you Lord for your everlasting Love. Thank you for your unwavering focus to call us into a relationship with you. The bible tells us to take hold of our thoughts, and so help us to take hold of those thoughts that distract us and use your truth to overcome them and follow your future for us. God, your victory can assure us in times of difficulty. You won that for us, you desire the best for us, and you will meet all our needs, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of July 18th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Uncommon Commonality

Speaker: Pastor Mike Campbell

Icebreaker

- There is nothing common about the kingdom of God, but it's through our common practices that we see God more and transform us - practices like meeting together in prayer and fellowship in a small group! How have you seen these common things produce an uncommon life with God?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

I. Uncommon Faith

- The apostles had an uncommon faith because of the many uncommon things they saw Jesus do and say. What are some things you've seen in your life that helped you have the same uncommon faith?
- Read **Hebrews 11:1**. Faith is the things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. In this season of life, what are things hoped for and not yet seen that you are trusting God for by faith?
 - What are some things you can see and you believe in? What are some things you can not see but still believe in?
- Having a church family that helps us grow in God is very important to the Christian walk. The people we seek advice from have a tremendous influence over us. Who do you go to for spiritual advice and why?
- What have you believed was impossible for God? Why is that impossible for God?

- Read **Romans 12:3** How does this faith differ from our society's views of faith?

II. **Uncommon Unity**

- Read **Ephesians 4:3** Are those you do life with promoting unity in your groups or do they point out the differences and cause division?
- Read **Philippians 1:27** How do we do this when we disagree with important people in our lives? How can we stay unified when we disagree?
- Unity requires believers to cling to the core things of the faith and recognize that secondary things are indeed secondary. Are there any dogmas you are clinging to (political, cultural, or even theological) that compromise your ability to be one with the whole body of Christ?
- Read **John 17:20-23**. Jesus prays for our unity as well, how does this impart how you value unity in the church?

III. **Uncommon Witness.**

- To witness is simply to tell others about our relationship with the Lord. How will you share about your relationship with Jesus this week?
- Have you struggled to believe in hearing another's testimony? What about their testimony is hard to believe?
- It is through the goodness of God that we are brought to repentance, by sharing our testimony we are able to shed light on God's goodness in our lives today and invite others to experience the same. How have you shared your story?
- Do you believe your story is common? Why is what our uncommon God done in your life common?

IV. Uncommon Generosity.

- God everything, what are you willing to share and not willing to share. Why is that?
- Where does your giving come from? Is it out of reverence to God or obligation because you know that we should?
- Nothing is truly our own; we are only stewards of what God has given us. When we work for something so hard over a long period of time do you struggle to realize though we worked to get it, it still belongs to God?
- A mindset of unity leads us to view our economic resources as available to meet others' needs. Have your material needs ever been met by the body of Christ? How can you care for the needs of the body of Christ?

Act On It

Encourage:

Remember that we serve an uncommon, great, unique God. He has made all of us uniquely for his own purpose. God has been faithful to us, his creation, his children. Though we do not always see, we can still believe in the love from our unseen Father. This world has been promoting us to choose sides or identify with a certain societal or political group but let us first identify with our Father, identify as sons and daughters of the living God and take the side of scripture over all things.

Ask:

Ask God to help you believe in what you can not see. Ask God to help us come together and identify first as followers of Christ before anything this world has labeled us. Help us Father to speak of the life you have given us, so that we can proclaim your goodness to those who are living without you in their lives. Give us Lord the confidence in you to meet all our needs so that we can give generously as we are called to do.

Challenge:

At the end of his sermon Pastor Mike Campbell left us a few questions:

1. Are you growing in this uncommon faith?
2. Are you dwelling with this uncommon unity with God and with your Church?
3. Are you speaking out with this uncommon witness so others know of His goodness?
4. Are you operating in generosity with this uncommon possessions mentality?

If these things are difficult, find one person to go alongside you.

Find a John to your Peter!

Prayer Request and Prayer

Father, thank you for all that you do. Thank you, the true God of this world, for you created all things uniquely working together with their own individual purposes. None other than you could have done this. Above the animals on the land, above the creatures in the sea, even above the angels above you love us Lord. Of all creation in its beauty we are the one with your image Lord. Let us be a reflection of you in the world. Help us to embody the character of Christ, to follow his example and share who you are with those who do not yet know you. While the time is short, let us use the time we have to glorify you God, Come Jesus Come, Amen!

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of July 11th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Prayer Under Pressure

Speaker: Pastor Beau Jensen

Icebreaker

- What would be harder to go a week without, your cellphone or your car?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

I. In times of Pressure... God's People Pray! (Acts 4:23-24)

- In tense situations what is your first reaction?
 - When you lead with prayer how does that change YOUR heart about the situation?
- What did you have to DEAL with yesterday?
 - What difference would it make if you first prayed and let Jesus DEAL with that situation instead?
- Have you struggled with QUANTITY of time spent with God and QUALITY of time spent with God?
- How do you acknowledge God as Sovereign Lord over your life?

II. In times of Pressure... God's People Learn to Pray the scriptures (Acts 4:25-28)

- Even Jesus had opposition in his life, all throughout his ministry people stood in his way, but still he faced it with courage.
 - How can you pray to God to give you that same courage from the Holy Spirit to go out and make a difference in the

community?

- Have you ever been so afraid of what people would think that you did not pray when you should have?
 - How would that change if you first prayed for the courage you needed?
- Acknowledging God in the midst of opposition shows the greatest courage when facing the enemy. Even though we all face threats we still have a mission.
 - What is your mission today and how can praying for the courage to face it help you get there?
 - When you get off track of that mission how can you get back on track and refocus?
- Share how remembering God's word encourages and strengthens you during troubling times. Share some of your go-to scriptures with one another.

III. In times of Pressure... God's People Pray to be Empowered with Boldness. (Acts 4:29-31)

- After listening to this point's title I stood up straighter, my chest puffed out a bit, I stood a little taller. Do you find that you have a physical response to the title and command?
- In verse 29 they ask God to intervene so they can speak with boldness, have you ever not gone to God because you are trying to figure out things on your own?
 - Why did you avoid God?
 - Does going to God make you feel weak and powerless?
- What does it mean to be bold and empowered?

- How does knowing that God gives us the Holy Spirit which grants us the boldness to speak God's word encourage you?

Act On It

Encourage: God wants us to speak His word to others. He has given us the greatest gift of the Holy Spirit, He has given us the written word of God, He has surrounded us with others to pray for us, to go out alongside us, to support us, and encourage us in all that we are doing in the name of God. Despite what the world may do to shut you down or reject you or even what our own self doubt may say to us our God says we have what it takes to overcome. Our God says He will make the way for us and He will give us the boldness we need to fulfill His will.

Ask: Let us ask God to fill us with the Holy Spirit through which we can have the boldness needed to speak the word of God. Ask God to remind us of His Sovereignty. Ask God to send you and go with you as we continue our walk of faith to be obedient and confident. Ask to be given a spirit of response instead of reaction. Pray to be shown whose back you need to have and thank him for those who have your back.

Challenge: Pastor Beau asked us who has our back, who's back do you have? We challenge you to call at least one person this week and pray for them. Pray for a family member or friend. Pray for that person you know is struggling and invite God into the situation through prayer. Remember the story Beau shared with us when his wife came to him in the pool. Our words don't have to be elegant or long but simple, true, and full of confidence that God can help any situation. Decide this week whose back to have.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Father, thank you for giving us the gift to pray to you. Thank you that we can lift up our voices and be heard by the creator of the universe. Thank you that you gave your Son for us so that we can have this relationship with you Lord. Thank you for the undeserving love you shower over us. Lord, let us go into the world from a position of overflowing love for you. Let us be filled with the Spirit so much that it is pouring out like a sponge soaked in water ready to be used to wipe clean the world. Father, thank you for boldness and all your many gifts, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of July 4th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: What's your Foundation!

Speaker: Pastor Mark Benton

Icebreaker

- What are you currently saving money for?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

I. Will you REFLECT Jesus? (Acts 4:13)

- Have you ever had to have a difficult or uncomfortable conversation?
 - What about it made it difficult?
 - How would having others there with you, supporting you, help you in that situation?
- What about your past made you believe you did not have what it takes to share boldly about Jesus?
- What about your life reflects that you've been with Jesus?
 - How is your prayer life, your reading life, your group life?

II. Will you REJECT him? (Acts 4:14-18)

- In what ways have you consciously or subconsciously rejected Jesus?
- To reject Jesus includes acknowledgement of His existence. Describe a time when you rejected God's love.
- How has the truth of God's word changed your theology or perspective on your life? On your struggles?

- How can we set aside the agendas of various world influences in favor of God's plan? How can we live a life of complete surrender to Jesus?
- What idols in your life are keeping you from living a life with Jesus and why are these difficult to let them go?

III. Will you FOLLOW Jesus? (Acts 4:19-22)

- Talk about the last time you told someone about the wonderful things God has done in your life.
- How strong is your foundation in Jesus?
 - What things need to die in your life to help strengthen that foundation?
- "You can live in the foundation of yourself, you can live in the foundation of others, or you can live in the foundation of God." -Pastor Mark Benton.
 - What would your life look like if you lived FROM the approval of God instead of FOR the approval of people?

Act On It

Encourage:

In today's message we heard that Peter and John were but uneducated common men who were worked through by Jesus to heal and spread the Gospel. Those who oppose the Gospel could not deny what God was doing to these men. God loves to use the unlikely, the old, the uneducated, and the murders. God is not limited by anything we are. God can use you no matter where you are in life, what you have done, or what you look like. Allow

Jesus to guide you into whatever he has in store for you for he is the power that walks with you who will give you the word in the hour that you need them. Trust in the Lord's plan for your life.

Ask:

Ask God for boldness to go forward and tell all people about what God has done in your life. Ask Him to come alongside you, to go before you, and support you. Ask God to give you the knowledge and wisdom you need for God tells us that He will give us these things. Ask God to help us find confidence not in ourselves, but in Him.

Challenge:

1. Who am I doing this for?
2. What are my barriers?
3. Pray.

Talk about what the difference is between believing in Jesus and following Jesus?

Prayer Request and Prayer

Father, thank you for calling us to your throne no matter what we have done. Thank you for sending your sons and daughter to all the world so that all may have the gift of eternal life and salvation in your name. Remind us that it is not written word that saves, but it is your Spirit. We are blessed to be part of a way God chose to reach the rest of the world. Let us then fulfill our calling to witness, to suffer, to be ambassadors in your name. Thank you God for your love, thank you for your faithfulness, thank you for healing, thank you for comfort, thank you God for deliverance, thank you for calling us sons and daughters, thank you for sending us your Son to die for all our sins, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of June 27th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: In Spite of Opposition We Must Share the Gospel

Speaker: Pastor Jordan Smalley

Icebreaker

- Who makes the best bickets and why? What condiments are best with them and why?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

I. There is a Cost to Sharing, but the Cost is Worth it. (Acts 4:1-3)

- Peter and John made people feel uncomfortable and challenged the common beliefs in the area. They were educating the people about Jesus who may not have known who he truly was. How would we change our approach to share the gospel when others may feel uncomfortable to hear it, or when it might change the social dynamic of their families?
- We often share the Gospel with the focus of sharing what Jesus has done for you with them, but have you thought to consider what chaos this might have on their lives? How could you help them in this case?
- Everything the Sadducees knew and believed in was challenged after hearing what Peter and John had to say. How might you feel when you are challenged? How would you want someone to approach you when you have different beliefs?
- Jordan said that sharing the Gospel may one day be a form of hate speech. How did hearing that make you feel? What can you do now to prevent that from happening?

- Sharing the Gospel will cost you something, popularity, friends, position, security. What are you willing to give in order to share the gospel with others?
 - How does that compare to other Christians around the world, who have given their lives to this great commission?

II. **Be Bold and Share the Gospel (Acts 4:5-10)**

- The ruling authorities asked why Peter and John did what they did. What are you doing to be asked why you live like you do, in a way that proclaims the name of Jesus Christ?
- Jordan asked, “Do we live such safe lives that no one around us would know that we follow Jesus?”
 - Do people around you know you follow Jesus or do you just blend in with the rest of the world?
- Have you ever been anxious or worried about what you might say to someone about the Gospel?
 - Read **Luke 12:11-12** , How can you walk with the confidence that the Holy Spirit is within you and He will be speaking through you?

III. **Jesus is the ONLY Way (Acts 4:11-12)**

- What other way to salvation have you heard that may be challenged by what we have read today?
- Read **Psalms 118:22** , what is the cornerstone in your life? What is the very thing that you need in your life that you build your life upon?

- Are you trying to fix something yourself using your own intelligence, in your own work, in your own confidence, by your own grit? How has that been working out?
 - When you give the situation over to God how has HE fixed the problems you're faced with?

Act On It

Encourage: God put you here for a purpose. That purpose is to spread the message of the Gospel. No matter what it costs us, we have to get this message out. Will you be a bold risk taker in sharing the Gospel as we are called to do? Remember that as Peter and John were surrounded by the authorities barring down on them trying to shake their foundation. That foundation filled them with the confidence to firmly proclaim the truth of the Gospel. We have the same foundation in Christ.

Ask: Ask God to help you be bold, to encourage us to walk out our faith, not just talk to other Christians about it in our Holy Huddles. Ask God to affirm to you that He is with you in all that you do. Remember that the cost will be far outweighed by our eternal reward.

Challenge: Take the risk, and push yourself out of your comfort zone. Tell someone new this week about the Gospel, invite someone to your small group, maybe encourage a current member to take a step into leadership themselves, or maybe pray over that cashier at Walmart that you see every week.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Father, thank you for challenging us in this present age. It was also part of your plan that we suffer in order to lift up your name. We are assured that it is not by our own power or authority that we are able to spread the glory of your name with those around us, but we can stand in confidence that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is alive and working in us. Help us to live Spirit Filled lives. Help us to always refer to your word in our life. Let us remember what our cornerstone truly is. Thank you father for sending us forward boldly and giving us the words that you have selected for us to share at the hour you have appointed, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of June 20th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Let's Bring Attention to Jesus

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What's your favorite summertime activity and why?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- Have you ever prayed so hard for something, only to have God say "no" or "wait"? How did His answer help you grow in His will?

I. Nothing Will Stop the Good News of Jesus (Acts 3:11-16)

- Have you ever thought that God was punishing/rewarding you because of something that you did or didn't do? Why do you think your actions had an effect? Do you still believe it? Why or why not?
- What's the difference between praying for miracles to happen and praying and allowing room for God to make them happen? Share an example of what you think these two prayers would look like.
- What do you feel is your role in keeping the gospel alive?
- How have you seen or heard someone speak against Christ in your own community? How did you react? Silence? Indifference? Or did you stand for Jesus like Peter?
- Share a time where you shared the gospel with someone. How was it received? How can we practice boldness in sharing the Good News despite the world's attempt to silence it?

II. Turn to Jesus - The Only Way to God (Acts 3:17-21)

- Describe a time where you believe you were acting in spiritual

ignorance. In what way were you being ignorant? What did you do about it?

- What is the difference between ignorance and willful disobedience? How would you walk with someone through both in order to turn them to Jesus?
- When was the last time that you shared your story of repentance and life change with a non-believer? Did you show them the power of God? What was their reaction? If you haven't, what's holding you back?
- What does it mean to be a good ambassador for Jesus? In what ways do you represent Jesus well? Where can you improve?
- Peter used his message to let people know that no matter what they did, it was not held against them. How do you think that must have felt? How does his message make you feel?

III. The Blessing of God is Found in Jesus (Acts 3:22-26)

- When you do something that grabs attention or is praise worthy, how to react? Where do you typically focus the attention?
- Describe a time where God was trying to get your attention about something. How do you know that it was God? What was the outcome?
- Who do you know that doesn't know and love God? Do you think He's directing you towards helping that person? How can you be bold like Peter and share the gospel with them?
- Read James 1:1-3 as a group. How can we practice faith in the midst of our trials without making demands?
- Does Jesus have all of the parts of your heart, or are there parts closed off to Him? What do you need to do posture yourself to go all in?

Act On It

Encourage: It's easy to enjoy good times, but tough times are... well, tough. Our God is powerful, He's loving and intentional, and He's miraculous. When we have no idea where to put our trust, we can trust that everything He does is meant to bring people back to Him. As Pastor Mike shared, God walks us through the hard things, and He is 100% committed to working for our good, growing us, and walking with us. Jesus redeems all, even the painful, discouraging, and embarrassing parts. Peter, despite his past and receiving criticism and questions, still shared who Jesus is and invited people to come see for themselves. Be encouraged in knowing that no matter how far we think that we run, God constantly pursues us because we are a part of His plan. Our stories - the good, bad, and ugly - are a part of His commitment to us. Let Him in and give Him all the glory!

Ask: Pray for God to show you the role you play in sharing the Good News. Ask for any obstacles between you and Christ to be removed so He can grow you. Pray that you allow yourself the same grace Jesus extends to you. Ask that He equips and uses you as needed. Ask to be shown how the way you were before Christ and after Christ can help point others to Jesus. Repent and pray for God to reveal where He is working in your life so you can share it with others.

Challenge: Stop holding back and let others know how good God is to you! Connect the dots of your story and how God has tried to work all things in your life together for good and for you to know Him better. Take a look at the things you've overcome or that you're still walking through and write out how God has still been present in those times. Start gathering the proof for your witness. Share that with someone this week! Is God putting people in your path to help, or putting you in place to help others? God does miracles, He only asks for us to move. Listen and obey.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Lord, we thank you for your love. Thank you for all of the ways you work in our lives. Thank you for strengthening us and standing in the gaps when we need you. Thank you for working everything in our lives in a way that grows us and makes us better. We're so grateful that because of your commitment to us, we get to bring attention to your will and truth. Keep opening our hearts towards growing closer to you. Give us the desire to pursue you in the same way that you run after us. Remind us to be joyful in the good times and to see the purpose and power in the painful times through which we walk. Help us have faith in knowing that you work everything for our good. Give us the boldness to share where we see you working in our lives. We pray for chances to bring attention to all that you are so that others can come to experience it as well. Thank you for helping us turn moments of guilt and shame into moments that beautifully display your power. We thank you, we love you, and we pray for all of this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of June 13th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Jesus Still Does Miracles

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What commercial jingle gets stuck in your head the most?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- Do you believe in miracles today? Have you ever witnessed a miracle?

I. There Will Always Be Human Need (Acts 3:1-3)

- What area of your life are you seeking healing from Jesus? How?
- Are there areas or needs where you feel God specifically wants to use you to help others? How have you responded to that call?
- What does your prayer life look like?
- Read **John 14:12-14**
 - Discuss what it means to pray bold prayers, why do you pray bold prayers, how do we pray bold prayers?
- God is the one performing the miracles but he uses us to do them, just as God uses Peter to heal in this passage. How can God use you?

II. We Must Give People What They Need, Not Just What They Want (Acts 3:4-8)

- What are some examples of needs that can't be taken care of by just offering money? What would need to be given instead?
- Read **Ephesians 3:8-11**
 - What are some of the treasures that are talked about in this

passage?

- What is the significance of the beggar being outside of the temple? Why did those helping him place him there instead of at the market or inside the temple?
- Read also **James 1:2-4** Do you believe there is a reason we go through trials? How can you use those times to help others and point them to God?
- How confident are you in Christ? Would you be confident enough to raise up someone whom you just prayed over? How can you build your confidence?
- How can we know when we are praying for what we want rather than what we need?

III. **Changed People Change People (Acts 3:9-10)**

- How have you used your life change to point people to Jesus?
- How can we use the trials and challenges we have been in to glorify God and point others to Him?
- When God answered your prayers or you've seen miracles happen how do you respond? Do you respond like the lame beggar or those who witnessed the miracle and recognized who he was and where he is now?

Act On It

Encourage: Even today, Jesus still does miracles! Now, the only difference is that through the Holy Spirit, we get to participate in them, too! Miracles don't exist just to fix problems, but also to give glory to God and to point people to God. We get the chance to answer someone's prayer in some way. There is nothing too big, too complex, or too messy that can't be turned around through the power of God, and this is the confidence that should be with us everytime we come in contact with a need. From the beginning, people have always been a part of God's plan, so be empowered,

find comfort, and boldly move forward knowing that you have the authority to work miracles everywhere you go.

Ask: Think through the needs of the people around you and pray for God to fulfill His promises for them and to use you as He needs you. Ask God to show you how you can make a difference. Ask God to show you how you can do miracles around you each day. Pray bold and empowered prayers for healing and fulfillment in Jesus' Name.

Challenge: Pray with someone that you know needs it, spend quality time with someone that you know does life alone, take a stressed coworker out for lunch, check in on that person that you haven't seen in a while. Get public about the power of God by either gathering for church wide prayer at our church on Tuesdays mornings at 9am or organizing a prayer walk or a "drive-by prayer" with your group through a neighborhood. Get involved in our quarterly SERVE Day on Saturday, July 10th, but don't let your serving stop there. As long as there are people, there will be needs, so be willing, observant, intentional and obedient when God reveals them.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Lord, thank you for making us a part of your divine plan. Grant us discernment to recognize that your miracles happen everyday, and that you can use us to help restore and heal those that are lost. Father, help us to approach your throne with boldness and increase our faith so that we may be able to help others and that you may be glorified in all things. Lord, let your Spirit fill us and help guide us as we pray; act as our Advocate and let us pray for the needs of others and not for our own wants or selfish desires. Open our eyes, ears and hearts to the needs around us. Move us to a place where praying and helping one another becomes a rhythm of our everyday lives. We submit to you and to the ways in which you desire to use us. We love you, we thank you, and we praise you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of June 6th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: The Model Church

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- Would you rather have invisibility or flight?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- What has been your biggest takeaway from Acts 2?
- What are some role models you've had in your life? What made you look up to them?

I. They Themselves... Devoted Themselves. (Acts 2:42)

- What is your number 1, time consuming, all-in passion? Why? Would you be willing to lay it down if God told you to?
- Based on this passage, how is Christian devotion different from religious devotion?
- Describe the moment that you chose to devote yourself to Christ.
- Is there anything standing in your way of being devoted to Jesus? How can you be more devoted and passionate to serve Christ now like the people in this passage did back then?

II. They Had Right Devotions (Acts 2:42, 44-47)

Devotions of the New Testament Church:

Devoted to the apostles' teaching (the Bible)

Devoted to fellowship

Devoted to breaking bread together

Devoted to prayer

- Which of the four devotions mentioned in v. 42 do you find the easiest to be devoted to? Which one is the hardest? Why?
- When we devote ourselves to Jesus, our lives are forever changed. Since devoting your life to Christ, in what ways is your life different from how it was before Christ?
- What distracts you or drags you down in your Christian walk? Social media, political debates, sin, etc.? How would your walk look without these things? How can you target and eliminate each of these distractions?
- What would our world look like if we were so devoted to God and to a life of generosity, that we just sold off what we didn't need, or we just gave away without thinking about it?

III. They Had Amazing Results (Acts 2:43, 47)

- Pastor Mike mentioned his social media post from this past week that said, "The early church had POWERFUL devotions. And that resulted in some POWERFUL results from God! I'm not sure we should expect God's Powerful display if we won't devote ourselves to some right things. #LORDHELPUS" How does this challenge you in your devotion life?
- Why is it so important to be involved in both church and in small groups? Are there risks in choosing one over the other?
- What are some reasons that you've heard from people who have chosen not to go all in? How do you stay connected to them? How have you prayed for them?
- What would be some activities that you could devote yourself to that would make you into a person that others can't wait to have around because they know God will do great things through you?

Act On It

Encourage: The early church didn't have the model of church that they provided for us. Through the Holy Spirit and their devotion to God, they were blessed, and now we are blessed with their example. It all starts with going all in, being truly devoted, by choice not by force, to Jesus. When you devote yourself to something, you are committed. It drives you. Let Jesus be your main devotion and commitment, and watch how it spills blessings into the lives of your families, your co-workers, your friends, and everyone who crosses your path. Remember the devotions shared in Acts 2:42 - The Bible, fellowship, breaking bread with others, and prayer, and actively pursue activities and practices that will grow you in these areas. Start devoting yourself to the things that God is devoted to and watch how He starts to change your life.

Ask: Pray for the willingness to let go and let God. Ask God to remove any distractions that are keeping you from going all in for the Kingdom. Ask for God to consume all of you - your heart, your thoughts, your mind. Pray for a heart of devotion focused on things that delight Jesus. Ask for opportunities to be grown and challenged in all four devotion areas.

Challenge: Switch one of your daily habits with one that will help you grow in your devotion. Find a bible plan or a past sermon to watch that will help you dig deeper into scripture. Invite people to your small group for food and fellowship. Start a small group at your work with some co-workers. Seek opportunities to grow in prayer, like our church wide prayer on Tuesday mornings. Make serving others a rhythm in your life by identifying one person this week that you can bless. If you're already doing that, take it a step further. Join a Dream Team and get involved in our July 10th Serve Day!

Prayer Request and Prayer

Heavenly father, thank you for the example of the early church. Thank you for the reminder that it all starts with our relationship and devotion to you. Lord, help our hearts to be devoted to the things that you love. Remove anything that's in the way of our devotion to you. Help the desires of our hearts to be right. Challenge us in the four areas of devotion we learned about in this passage, show us where we are strong and where we can grow. Help us to grow and live in a way that grows your Kingdom. Help us desire to be a people committed to you and each other. Mold us into devoted, sacrificial, generous prayerful people. We love you and want to please you by living in a way that honors you. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of May 30th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: The Response to the Gospel

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What food do you love a lot that a lot of people might find a little odd?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- What are some blessings from the church that we tend to take for granted?
- What opportunities have you had in the last week to promote Jesus? Did you do it? What happened?
- When you hear a really great, inspirational message, what's your first response? Does it last?

I. Jesus Above All, For All (Acts 2:32-36)

- Have you ever had doubts or questions about the resurrection? What caused this? How did the proofs that Pastor Mike shared (Over 120 witness accounts, never found the body of Jesus, many people died by sharing this testimony) challenge your beliefs ?
- Can you imagine yourself being one of the 120 witnesses? Knowing what the consequence would be for sharing your testimony, would you be able to be a true martyr for Christ?
- Peter used Psalm 110 to relate the message of the gospel to the Jews. In our world today, how can you relate the gospel to those around you in a way that they would understand?

- Pastor Mike explained the difference between “LORD” and “Lord.” How can you honor God as LORD in your life? Do you trust His authority? Are you truly submissive to it? Why or why not?

II. **The Gospel Changes People (Acts 2:37-38)**

- What’s the difference between saying, “I know what the Bible says,” versus “I think that...”? How can that impact your witnessing to others?
- Are you living in a way that would lead people to Jesus? How can you start getting the same reaction as Peter did when you share the Good News?

“You can be just as lost in religion as you can be in sin.” - Pastor Mike Burnette.

- When you read scripture, are you doing it to grow in knowledge or to be changed? Do you allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you as you’re reading?
- When you’re sharing the gospel with others, what takes the lead: Your head or your heart? Are you speaking to share facts or are you speaking to their heart?
- Do you struggle with repentance? What would your life look like if you truly repented instead of just asking for forgiveness?

III. **This Gospel is for Everyone (Acts 2:39)**

“This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as ransom for all.” - 1 Timothy 2:3-6

- Do you have people in your life that you struggle to share the gospel with? Why? How does the word from 1 Timothy 2:3-6 encourage you?
- What disqualifies you from stepping up to God’s calling for your life? How is that bigger than the God who is telling you what He is going to empower you to do?

IV. This is How God Changes the World (Acts 2:40-41)

- What would it look like for you to live out your faith with such passion and conviction like Peter?
- Peter was a regular person, but because he was faithful, he preached a sermon that reached thousands. How does this encourage you?
- How are you being a vessel by which God gets His message out? What can you start doing this week?

Act On It

Encourage: Peter didn't need a special Bible certification to share the gospel. He stepped forward in boldness and faithfulness, knowing that he was sharing truth, that it was his calling, and that the Holy Spirit would step in and make the change. Be encouraged in knowing that it's not you who goes forward alone. We've been designed to accomplish some amazing things, not in our own might, but with the power of God. As we grow in our faith, we're not doing it just for ourselves. We all have a calling on our lives to spread the Good News, which we wouldn't be able to accomplish without submitting to the LORD over all. We don't need to earn special authority to share the gospel because we already have it, thanks to Jesus. As you continue your walk with Christ, respond by being bold, being passionate, and being faithful in sharing God's goodness.

Ask: Pray for a boldness like Peter, for the strength to stand up for truth in a world where you could fall for anything. Pray to be used as a vessel of God's goodness empowered by the Holy Spirit. Ask God for the ability to communicate with others in which they would understand the gospel.

Challenge: Look for opportunities to be like Peter this week, at home, in your neighborhood, at work. Find a time to preach the gospel to those around you. Start studying scripture in a way that not only gives you knowledge of God's will but also allows God to transform any areas in your

life that need it. If there's any area in your life that needs true repentance, bring it to God. Go public with your profession of faith in Jesus by being baptized, if you haven't, and truly receive the gift of the Holy Spirit that God has waiting for you.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Lord, we thank you for the example that Peter provides us on how to share the gospel with those who are far from you. We thank you for all of the witnesses that came before us so that we could be witnesses as well. As we move forward in our week, we pray for you to use us like Peter in Acts 2. Grow us in our willingness and desire to share the gospel. Help us to stop complaining about all that is wrong and to step up as divine leaders through your truth in scripture. Overflow us with your Holy Spirit so that we can pour into those in our lives who need you. We surrender our agendas and commit our assignments to your mission. We repent of anything that is keeping us from growing closer to you and receive the work you want to do in our lives. Continue to speak to us, guide us, and empower us as we make a difference in the world around us. We ask all of this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of May 23th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Spiritual People share Jesus (despite their present and past failures)

Speaker: Pastor Beau Jensen

Icebreaker

- If you could live in any time period which would you choose and why?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- Think of an embarrassing moment in your life, what made it embarrassing then? Does it still bother you now?
- What has made you feel unqualified in your life? Perhaps for a promotion, being a parent, or even feeling unqualified for what God is calling you to do?

I. Jesus Ends the agony of Death (Acts 2:22-24)

- The Jews had a hard time accepting that Jesus had not come like they believed he would, that he would take the form of a servant instead of a conqueror that would free them from the oppression of the Romans. Have you ever struggled to accept Jesus because He did not speak to you or come to you in the manner you thought he would?
- What makes living in agony more appealing than giving the pain over to God and talking to someone about what pains you are dealing with? Why is it so scary for us to verbalize this?
- How do you think the audience of Peter's message felt when they learned that they killed the Messiah, the Son of God? Do you understand the weight of our sins? How did it make you feel when you learned that your sins have been paid for by Christ and that

because he was resurrected we now have a pathway to forgiveness by God through Jesus?

- How does the promise of God free us from the fear of death? What does it look like to share this promise with others? What would you share from your own life or from scripture with people who don't know God?

II. Know how to Share God's Word. (Acts 2:25-28)

"When God's word is shared effectively, it removes guilt and shame, because Jesus took away our guilt and shame!!" —Pastor Beau Jensen

- How do you share the gospel in a way that is loving and not shameful?
- How can we be authentic, be real with people, and to make it a conversation instead of preaching a sermon to them?
- How can your relationships pave a way for you to share the gospel with those around you?
- Has someone ever tried to use shame to share God's promise with you? Was it effective?

III. Spiritual People Share Jesus because it's God's Promise for Everyone (Acts 2:29-33)

- How can we follow Peter's example to share the Gospel to someone in a clear way, one that is not filled with so much scripture that it becomes confusing, but is concise and gets the message across?
- What makes you think you need permission to move beyond what you've done in the past to share Jesus? What makes you think you can't move beyond that to be an effective communicator?
- If you are feeling unqualified to share, what is it that you feel you are lacking? Is it a lack of scriptural knowledge, confidence, or something else?

Act On It

Encourage: Your past does not disqualify you from sharing Jesus with others. The Holy Spirit is in you, the same one that raised Jesus from the dead, that gave Samson his strength, and the same one that performed countless miracles even today. This same Spirit will help you in your understanding, and will give you the words you need in the appointed time God has already planned for you to use them. What other qualification do you need beyond that which God has already given you? Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-16 that reminds us of the understanding the Spirit of God gives us.

Ask: God, remove any feelings of fear, shame, or guilt that we may hold onto from our past so that we may share the gospel. Lord, help us with self doubt, let us not compare our testimony with that of others and that our story is our own. Lord, let what we speak be a word from you, not leaning too much on our own understanding or knowledge of scripture but listening to the Spirit. Lord, we ask for the confidence to share when prompted when you have called us to, not when we are ready to.

Challenge: Share your testimony with your small group if you have not already, or one other person this week. Pray that their heart be in a season to receive God's word. Pray that the Holy Spirit be working in them through your story. Continue to remain in the word, to apply scripture on your heart so that we may all carry the word with us at all times.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Father, give us the courage, the opportunity, and wisdom to share the word you have given us, not those we believe we should say. Father, I pray that this week you challenge us, that you send someone to us this week we can tell about the life that can only be found in the name of your Son. Let us focus on relationships first, leading in love, and sharing the good news in a way to show your true nature, one of Love not shame. One that is welcoming to all, not for a select few. One that is free, not something that

we earn. Lord, thank you for making a way for us when we never could,
thank you for being our beloved Father, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of May 16th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: How Spiritual People Speak

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- If you were famous, what would you be famous for?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- What stands out the most to you from this sermon? What encouraged you? Challenged you? Is there anything that you have questions about?
- Share a time where you tried to explain something to someone, but it was received completely wrong. What was the outcome?

I. Spiritual People Speak Up (Acts 2:14-15)

- Pastor Mike encouraged us to be Holy Spirit-led spiritual people, not religious people. What's the difference?
- The wrong side is any side that doesn't promote Jesus. Which side have you been promoting? What are you promoting by not saying anything at all?
- What are some ways you've heard others share scripture? Was it receptive or did it push others away?
- How can shutting down the drama and speaking truth help in your family, group or team?

II. Spiritual People Speak The Truth of God's Word (Acts 2:16-20)

- How have you been challenged to love people as God loves people in the last 18 months? Do you view respecting people as an act of love

or as being politically correct?

- Where do you go first when you are struggling to find answers? Have you been struggling to find what is actually true? What would it look like to turn to the Bible first?
- Staying in the Word is the way to fill your “spiritual gun magazine.” What have you been filling your spiritual gun magazine with? Your word or God’s Word? What was the impact?
- What are some struggles you have with memorizing scripture? What are some ways that have helped you keep it on your heart and mind?

III. **Spiritual People Point Others to Jesus (Acts 2:21)**

- How do you treat those who offended you? How often do you pray for those who are far from God?
- Has there been a time where God prompted you to speak to someone and you did? How did it turn out?
- How can you use your voice to point others toward Jesus day by day? What opportunities do you have now to be intentional about sharing scripture?

Act On It

Encourage: Remember, because of the Holy Spirit, we are spiritual people. Our world needs a bold, courageous church of spiritual leaders, and we are more than equipped and empowered to spiritually lead others. Let the time that you spend with God and in His Word increase and be your guidance in difficult times and situations. Reading scripture is amazing, but it can also be very confusing. However, we serve a God who wants us to know Him, and Jesus even tells us in Matthew 7:7, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it be opened to you.” Get in the Word, spend time with God, and pray. God will help us to understand. What matters is that we’re speaking up for God, speaking the truth of God, and helping lead people to Jesus.

Ask: Ask God to remove any obstacles that are currently in the way of you spending time with God and meditating on His Word. Ask for the boldness to speak up for others and against things that you know aren't truthful. Pray that your words be life-giving, not fueled by misleading emotions. Pray that everything you say to others contains something that will lead them to Jesus. Pray to be filled with a desire to seek and share God's Word.

Challenge: The next time someone tries to bring drama around you, feel empowered to shut it down and be a reminder of God's goodness. Anyone that you're battling with right now, write down their names and start praying for them. Think of three people that you can text and share scripture with this week. Follow up with them. Make scripture a regular part of your life by guarding your daily devotion time, using sticky notes to post scriptural reminders around your home or office, anything that will bring the Word into view throughout the week, not just Sundays.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Lord, we thank you for your promise of eternal life that we can start living right now. Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit so we can be spiritual people that promote peace and hope in times where they can't be found. The world has taken us through so much for the last 18 months, but you have remained good and faithful. You have never changed and as we move throughout the rest of our days, let that truth lead the way in our relationships, in our work lives, in all of our circles. Help us move from a place of comfortability and silence to a place where you praise your name above everything else. Help us replace any other voices to which we've been listening with You and Your Word. Lord, use us to spread your Word to others that need to hear from You. We thank you for the opportunities that you're going to bring our way from this message today. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of May 9th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: This Changes Everything

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- If you sat next to Jesus on a bus, what would you talk about?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- What stands out the most to you from this sermon? What encouraged you? Challenged you? Is there anything that you have questions about?
- Have you ever had a promise made to you that you had to wait a long time to receive? How did it feel when you finally received it?

I. God is On the Move (Acts 2:1-4)

- What was your understanding of the Holy Spirit prior to hearing this sermon?
- In this sermon, we learned that the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was very strategic. He came at a time of harvest. What does it look like to be harvested by God?
- "You see not a Christian without the Holy Spirit." - Pastor Mike Burnette. How does this truth affect you? Does it challenge your previous thoughts on salvation?
- How has the Holy Spirit changed your life? Share some times that God fulfilled promises for you. What promises have you received but didn't notice at first?

II. God Changes Us... For Others (Acts 2:4-11)

- How has the Spirit of God changed the way you speak to others? How have you used your new gift to tell others about God? Was it for your own glory or to reach others?
- Has God ever empowered you to do something that you didn't think you could do? Please share.
- God is not limited in His ability to use us to send the message of salvation to *ALL* people. How has it been hard for you to share the Gospel with others?
- Have you given all of you to God to let Him use you to His will? How can you surrender to God so that He can use you to speak to people far from Him?

III. What Will We Do With This? (Acts 2:12-13)

- When you share your story with others, what are the reactions that you get? How do you handle them?
- Why is it hard to say yes to God when you don't understand why or how He is calling you?
- Are there situations in your life where you've been mocked as a Christ follower? Have you ever mocked God? What happened?
- What are you going to do with what God has charged us to do?

Act On It

Encourage: As Christ followers, we get the gift of the Holy Spirit that helps us live in the fullness and freedom that God desires for us. Christianity doesn't mean we get to avoid those tough times that life brings. We hit spots where it seems we can never win, and then just like that, the Holy Spirit comes in and gives us the encouragement and power to keep going. We get to enjoy peace, we are strengthened, we are empowered. But most importantly, we get to help build the Kingdom by sharing this goodness with

those in our lives who need it, too. The Spirit is given to us to help reach the lost. We get to serve as Christ ambassadors. Let the Spirit overflow from you as an encouragement to those around you. Speak the mighty works of God to those around you and watch how God works in their lives. This is the assignment on our lives and we are more than equipped to do it.

Ask: Pray for God to show you just how powerful the Holy Spirit is in your life. Pray to overcome any fears or excuses that you have in sharing God's works with others. Ask for eyes to see others as more important than yourself. Pray for the names of people that you can serve with your story in Christ and for God to place the right words in your heart to share His goodness.

Challenge: Remember, the Holy Spirit came at the time of harvest to reach people far from God. What can you start doing today to share the Move of God in your life with others? If you don't know where to start, start by truly receiving all that God has for you and in you. Receive His salvation, forgiveness, grace, love, and all of the other gifts He has for you. Next, start praying for God to put the names of people around you that you can tell about Him. Pray for five names to get started and write them down. Being a witness of God to others begins with your family members, neighbors, co-workers, or friends that you know are far from God. Finally, schedule some time to meet with those people to share God's mighty works and trust that the Spirit will be with you during these conversations. Invite them for lunch, dinner, coffee, or a pow-wow around a campfire and share His goodness with them.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Lord, thank you for this message today. Thank you for what you've started in the Spirit and for what you'll continue to do through us as we truly receive it. Remove any obstacles in the way of us receiving all that you've done. Keep filling us with your Spirit. Help us remember that we don't have to rely

on our own strengths because the same power that raised Jesus from dead now resides in us and moves with us every day. And as we are reminded of all of the blessings you've given to us personally, we pray for opportunities to share your great works with others. Help us to step forward and to see people as more important than ourselves. Reveal people in our lives now that we can reach by sharing your goodness. Work in our minds and hearts and gift us with the Spirit and the words to tell people about your mighty works. May we not be held back by fear or uncertainties but be propelled forward with boldness and confidence in advancing your mission. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of May 2nd, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Healthy Commitments for the Church

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What is your favorite thing to eat for breakfast?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- What stands out the most to you from this sermon? What challenged you? Is there anything that you have questions about?
- What has been your biggest takeaway from Acts 1?

I. Committed to Right Devotions (Acts 1:12-14)

a. Devoted to Obeying Jesus

b. Devoted to Life Together

- Is there something you're waiting on God for? How do things go when you try to press forward on your own? How can you remind yourself of God's timing when it seems like it's taking too long?
- Are there situations or things in your life where you don't mind waiting? What makes waiting hard? Does your devotion change the longer you wait?
- Are you trying to obey out of intellectual obedience or out of your love for Jesus? Obedience seems so simple, but why is it so difficult?
- Pastor Mike said, "Don't be concerned with the ends of the world when you're not concerned with the end of your street." How does

your devotion look to those closest to you if you're too distracted by those further away?

- Is there a difference between connecting to devotions versus being committed to devotions? What are they? Where do you lie?
- As the leader of your house, are you leading your entire family to Jerusalem or are some being left behind? How can you get them onboard? Why is this important? How do you see your role in helping them know Jesus?

II. Committed to a Biblical Worldview (Acts 1:15-20)

- Sometimes we can find ourselves falling into a place where practices of faith become a routine. What are some ways that we can keep attending church, reading our Bible, and gathering in small groups fresh?
- When you confront those you disagree with, do you shove them the way you think they should go or do you gently guide them toward a better path?
- How much time do you spend in the Bible and how does this reflect when there is chaos around you? Are you reflecting fruits of the Spirit or what society says?
- How has looking to scripture changed how you look at the world?
- What are some worldly worldviews that you have struggled to put into biblical worldview?
- What's your idol? Who are you following and who are you leading people to? Who are you quoting? CNN, society, social media, the Bible?

III. Committed to Godly Leadership (Read Acts 1:21-26 as a group)

- What is the godly leadership that you have in your life right now? How can you get more of it?

- Not everything in the Bible is biblical. For example, in Acts 1:26, we read about the apostles casting lots or “rolling the dice” to choose the next apostle instead of praying and being led by the Spirit. How does this challenge you?
- Can you imagine making major life decisions based on “rolling the dice”? Do you roll dice or do you wait and listen to the Holy Spirit? Why should prayer be an important part in our decision-making?
- What are some ways that you can be the godly leadership that our world needs right now?
- How can our small group do life together other than just meeting once a week?

Act On It

Encourage: With the state of our world today, it’s totally natural for us to want to make sense of all of the craziness and chaos. When we have something that we can use as a foundation, we find it easier to stand strong in times specifically designed to blow us over. What a blessing that as Christians, we don’t have to pound the pavement trying to find the truth. We get our foundation from God’s Word and Spirit. We just have to decide to ground ourselves in His truth and let that be the filter we use in our lives everyday. If we follow the example of the early Christ followers in this passage, not only can we have peace, but we get to help others have it as well. Our world needs leaders that stand on a biblical worldview, and God has empowered us to become these leaders. Receive your assignment today.

Ask: Pray for God to open your heart towards obedience to Him. Pray for opportunities to be loving, committed, and devoted to his people in your life. Pray for scripture to be guiding light to your path in everything that you do each day. If you struggle with listening to voices from social media, the news, etc., pray that God’s voice becomes the loudest. Pray for a new filter

on your life, one that promotes a biblical worldview. Pray for chances to lead from the Bible and to just be nice to people, offering a service, a kind word, or prayer.

Challenge: Take a look at the commitments you currently have in your life. Are they right? Do they align with obeying Jesus and being devoted to people? If not, start taking some next steps to get them aligned. Set an appointment on your calendar to spend time in the Word of God and grow your devotion. Use Proverbs 25:21-22 as a guiding verse and pray for the enemies in your life this week. Decide that instead of bargaining with God, you are going to obey and move as He has called you. If you feel God has put on a calling on your life and you've been still, start moving. If you don't know how to move, share it with the group to receive some direction and accountability. You are more than welcome to reach out to volunteers, staff, or pastors at our church as well.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for being our leader and source of direction in a world of things that compete to be the number one voice in our lives. Thank you for the empowerment you've given us through the Holy Spirit to be ambassadors of your leadership. Lord, move us into the Great Commission that you've assigned to us. Set our hearts on being obedient to you and being committed to your people, no matter what. Help us be the godly leaders that you have called us to be by resisting what the world tells we should think and proclaiming your word as the absolute truth. Speak to us as we learn and grow in your word so that we can use it as the active, sharp, and power tool that you breathed it to be. Transform us and direct us to a way of life that honors you everyday. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of April 25th, 2021

Sermon: Living in the Tree of Life

Speaker: Pastor Chris Hodges, Lead Pastor of Church of the Highlands

Icebreaker

- When you hear the word “Cajun”, what comes to mind?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- What stands out the most to you from this sermon? What challenged you? Is there anything that you have questions about?

I. Genesis 2:8-9 (NIV)

Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

- What was your definition of the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil before today’s sermon? How does your definition differ from or mirror the definition shared by Pastor Hodges?

II. Genesis 2:16-17 (NIV)

And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

- We live in a fallen world and know how sin affects us and others. What do you think Adam and Eve thought the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was? Do you think they were naive about it since they didn’t live in a fallen world? How many times do we commit sins thinking we are doing the “right” thing?

III. Genesis 3:1-7 (NIV)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

- Can you recognize a time in your life where you thought you were making the "right decision", but it turned out to be a behavior-centered choice instead of a heart-focused decision?
- Has religion gotten in the way of your relationship with God? How has God broken through those barriers to get to your heart?

IV. Tree of Life versus The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil - Do more to get to God.

Tree of Life - Receive what Jesus already did.

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil - Try to get God's approval.

Tree of Life - Receive God's love for me.

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil - Focuses of the external.

Tree of Life - Focuses on the internal.

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil - Obey out of duty

Tree of Life - Obey out of delight.

- What's the "why" behind the reason that you read your Bible? Go to church? Attend a small group?
- Describe ways you've tried to earn God's approval. What would it mean for you to remember that God loves you freely and unconditionally?
- Which tree do you find yourself living in the most? Is your walk focused more on external behavior or on internal changes?
- Have you fallen in love with Jesus? Use 1 Corinthians 13 as reference if needed.

V. How to Eat from the Tree of Life

1. Fall in Love with Jesus
 2. Respond to sin with Life
 3. Guard Our Hearts from Going Back
- Read John 14:15. Which side of the comma are you living on?
 - Describe the first time you experience God's love. How has it changed you?
 - In your relationships (marriage, parenting, work, friendships), are you showing grace and letting love change them? If not, what can you do differently to share God's grace?
 - What guardrails do you have in place to keep you from falling back into a mindset of going through the motions to please God instead of developing a relationship with God?

Act On It

Encourage: From the very beginning, we were created to be in relationship with God, but then sin entered the world, and now our current reality has been crippled by sin. God saw this and intervened and bridged the gap we could not close on our own with the Blood of Jesus. Because of His love for us, we get to love Him again and our relationship with Him. Galatians 2:21

tells us that if righteousness were obtained through works, then Christ died for nothing. So find comfort in knowing that we can't disqualify ourselves from his grace nor can we work ourselves to the bone to earn badges of it. God loves us and values that relationship above all. Love him and the rest will follow effortlessly.

Ask: Ask God to erase any thoughts or feelings you have about needing to work your way to God. Pray for discernment to know the tree from which you are currently eating and invite God to realign anything that falls short of the Tree of Life. Pray for any loss of innocence or shame to be overcome by God's promises. Pray for a reminder of the grace that God gives you everyday so that you can extend it to others. Finally, pray for God to help you build and fortify guardrails in your life that can keep you from falling prey back to a life focused on your own works rather than relying on the God that can do anything.

Challenge: Take an inventory of your relationship with God. Which tree does it resemble the most? What are some next steps that you can take to move into the Tree of Life? If you need help, ask the group for help. Does grace come first in difficult situations with difficult people? Decide that grace will lead the way when you're dealing with difficult people or difficult times this week.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you so much for giving us your unconditional love. Help us put this lesson into action and give us the wisdom to know when we're straying from you. Help us know when we need to stop trying to control and just surrender. Help us crave your presence above all. Protect us from anything that takes us out of the Tree of Life and keeps us from the things that you have planned for us. Help us live life today to bring honor to your name. Let us find rest in knowing that when we mess up, you extend your grace while we learn the truth. Your truth will always prevail. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of April 18th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: God's Power In Us, For Others

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- If you were a condiment, what would you be, and why?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- What stands out the most to you from this sermon? What challenged you? Is there anything that you have questions about?

I. God's Kingdom, God's Timing (Acts 1:6-7)

- Being a Christian means that the Holy Spirit lives inside of you. How does this truth affect you?
- Has there been a time in your life where you were looking for something that you thought was important and then God gave you an answer that changed your perspective? Can you understand why his timing was different?
- How do you trust in God when you have questions that still haven't been answered? What has been your typical response when you don't understand?
- Rather than asking God to do or show you something, what would it look like to first stop, submit to his authority, and let Him move at his pace?

II. We Receive The Spirit's Power with Purpose (Acts 1:8)

- How has God equipped you as a witness (Relationships, abilities, or opportunities)? Are you currently using these tools?
- How has someone else's witness affected your walk with Christ?
- What have you seen in your life that you know is from God and how have you seen God use his power through you?
- Have you ever been in a situation where it was uncomfortable or costly, but you followed the call of God anyway? What was the outcome?
- When was the last time you told someone about Jesus? What did the conversation look like? What was the outcome?

III. We Work While We Wait (Acts 1:9-11)

- Do you feel like you need to know more about God before you can work for him? What are you waiting on to happen before you move? Has this become an excuse to never take the next step?
- Romans 8:34 tells us that Jesus is praying for us all the time. How does that affect you? Does it build your confidence in God's promises?
- How are you witnessing to your Jerusalem (Friends, family co-workers, etc.)? If you're not, what's one thing you can do today? How can you be a better witness, make disciples, and walk in the power of God?
- Has your love for Jesus been enough to motivate you to move for Jesus? If not, what has gotten in the way of your witnessing and how can you start to remove those obstacles?

Act On It

Encourage: How freeing is it to know that we don't need to know every single detail of every step of everything in the world? Our trust in God brings us rest and comfort. Once we submit to his timing, his assignment for our lives, and the power he gives us to move, the path ahead of us gets a lot clearer and way easier to traverse. He won't call us forward into something without telling us what to do and how to do it, and he will equip us to accomplish it. His timing will always be different than ours, but it will always be better. 2 Corinthians 4:16 reminds us that because of the Holy Spirit, we don't need to get discouraged, anxious, or fearful while we wait, for we are being renewed on the inside every day. That same power equips and strengthens us to move forward into our assignment. If we have received the Holy Spirit, what do we have to fear?

Ask: Pray for peace to reign over whatever difficulties you're currently facing so that trusting the Lord gets easier. Ask for the Holy Spirit to come alive in the places of your life where you feel stuck. Pray for more opportunities for God to use you and what he's done in you to witness to others. Ask to see the tools that he's already given you to be a witness and how to use them. Pray that any anxious thoughts or fears associated with sharing your story be cast out by the fulfillment of growing the Kingdom.

Challenge: Be willing to get a little uncomfortable and messy in your assignment from God. Start switching the focus from yourself and start thinking of how you can help someone else get closer with God. Start a conversation with someone you know that needs to know God. Ask what they think of when they hear the word "church" and use that to open the door for witnessing. As you're out this week, look for someone you don't know and ask if you can pray for them. Invite them to join you for small group or for church. While you read your Bible this week, take one scripture that you're reading and figure out one practical way to put it into practice.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for giving us the same power that you gave to Jesus. From now on, as we move through our lives, help us to focus on your will, to rely on your love, believe in your timing, and to trust that you have our best interest in mind. Remind us that even though it may bend, stretch, or hurt us, you are still loving us and growing us. The benefits of waiting on you outweigh anything that we could do on our own. Give us the wisdom and boldness to reach out to others and share what you've shown us, even if it makes us uncomfortable. Encourage us to tell others around us about what you gave so that they can come to know you and start a relationship with you. We're ready to start living in our assignment, send us out. We thank you for the power, the people that you are going to send us to, and for the life change that you will do in and through us. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of April 11th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Acts 1:8 Prioritize Disciples

Speaker: Pastor Sam Johnson

Icebreaker

- What has been the best idea you have ever had?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- What stands out the most to you from this sermon? What challenged you? Is there anything that you have questions about?

I. Jesus's Plan

- Why do you think Jesus came to be a SERVANT of the world rather than coming as the KING of the world?
- Jesus's strategy was to invest in 11 faithful men to carry the message to the world after He was gone.
 - Why do you think Jesus began with a small group of 11 disciples to begin the church?
 - What would it look like for you to join His mission to expand the church?

II. Called to Witness

- **Acts 1:8 ESV - But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my WITNESS in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."**
 - How has someone invested in you, and who is someone you can invest into?

- We do not all have to be on staff at a church or a small group leader to be a witness. We are ALL called to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. We are the greatest Christian that someone knows in your lives. How can YOU be a witness to those around you to grow the church? (see Titus 2:1-10)
- *“By the power of the Holy Spirit you will do greater things.”* - Pastor Sam Johnson
 - Have you invited the Holy Spirit to come alongside you to fulfill the mission God has given you?

III. Faith and Evidence

- **Heb 11:1 (KJV) – Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**
 - What EVIDENCE have you seen from the FAITH you have placed in God?
 - What have you seen that COULD be, and believe that it WOULD be?
- At the end of the sermon Pastor Mike asked how many churches that Pastor Sam Johnson helped plant over the years; rather than focusing on the number of buildings constructed. Pastor Johnson reminded us of the true goal, that HUNDREDS of THOUSANDS of lives were being changed by JESUS as a result of those buildings!
 - We may be doing great things but how can you make an impact in other’s lives?

Act On It

Encourage: It may take longer than we like but we must hold to our faith and God's evidence will come. It does not all fall on you to witness, the same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, that gave the Apostles the ability to speak in tongues, also rests in you and this great HELPER will help you accomplish the task God has given you. Even Peter denied Jesus three times and Jesus still used him to build His church. The invitation to respond to His call is still open no matter if this is the first or fifth time He has called you.

Ask: Ask God to help you speak boldly as we see in Acts 9:28 as Saul (Paul) was speaking about God in Jerusalem. Pray for God to give you opportunities to witness to the world and those around you. In those opportunities do not worry about what you should say or that you may fail at the lack of knowledge for the Holy Spirit will give you the words to speak as we see in Luke 12:12.

Challenge: You can be a part of the ministry of Jesus Christ as well. Your place might look different from someone else's. Perhaps you are led to share the Gospel in your home with a small group, in your city as part of an outreach ministry, or out in the world on missions. Maybe you can donate your time or resources. How will you step out in faith? If you are interested in missions, contact Pastor Mike Campbell at mike.campbell@lifepointchurch.tv. If you have never been on a mission trip, would you be willing to go?

Prayer Request and Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, send your Spirit and make known to us the plan you have before us. Guide us in your mission for us to take part in your great commission to speak the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Father, send people alongside us that will help us achieve these things for your glory. Help us to remember that you have given us so much, even the suffering

and brutal death of your son on the cross for all of us when none of us deserved it, and now we have the opportunity to share this message with others. Father, give us the boldness when the opportunity comes to share your love with those around us, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of April 4th, 2021

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: The Promise Fulfilled

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What is your go-to karaoke anthem?

Conversation Starters and Sermon Review

- What stands out the most to you from this sermon? What challenged you? Is there anything that you have questions about?
- When someone makes a promise to you, what's the first thought that comes to your mind? Does it depend on the person? Why?

I. God Has Promised to Change Our Lives

Have group members take turns reading **Genesis 1:26, Jeremiah 31:33-34, Ezekiel 36:26-28, and John 14:15-17.**

- What does it mean for us to be “image bearers of God”? How do you feel knowing that you are the very image of God?
- What makes it difficult to trust in God’s promises? What is your typical response when you feel like your prayers aren’t being answered?
- How has your thankfulness for God’s promises helped move you toward living the life that God wants you to live? What can you change in your life today that would bring you closer to God?
- If someone were to look at your life, would they see that you are being led by the Holy Spirit? Do your actions show your love for God?

II. God Has Kept His Promise Through Jesus

Have your group read **Acts 1:3-5**.

- In what areas of your life do you often doubt God's promises? Where have you been putting your faith instead?
- How have you seen God's promises come alive for you so far? What ways has the Holy Spirit asked you to be faithful with where you're at now and what has been your response?
- How does being baptized with water differ from being baptized with the Holy Spirit? Does this challenge your previous thoughts on baptism? How have you seen the baptism described in Acts 1:5 in your own life?

III. God's Promise is For You, Today!

Have group members take turns reading **John 14:15, 2 Corinthians 6:2,** and **2 Corinthians 5:17**.

- Compare and contrast your life before and after becoming a new creation in Christ. If comfortable, share some of the significant transformations you've noticed or some of the areas that God is still refining.
- What are some promises of God that you need to choose to believe today? How can our group help?
- Many believe in God, but do you LOVE Him? Does He have your whole heart? Are there stumbling blocks that are keeping you from your identity as a new creation in Christ?

Act On It

Encourage: Promises made by people get broken all the time. When that happens, we get disappointed, we get angry, and we start doubting who's really in our corner. That's why we are truly blessed that we can find rest and comfort in God's promises. His promises are always there, and they are always true. When we mess up, He promises to fix it, but we have to be willing to let Him work. God's best transformational work takes place when we humble ourselves, set aside our doubts, and pursue our relationship with Him. Through Christ, God has proven His love for us. And because He knows the troubles that we face, God takes His love a little further and gifts us with His Spirit as empowerment, guidance, and direction toward living an eternal life in a broken world. As we get closer to God, our love for Him will grow, our hearts will change, and our actions will follow suit. We don't have to work to get it right because God IS right.

Ask: Ask to be reminded of God's promise to change your life and for the sight to see yourself as an image bearer of God, even when you mess up. Pray that you discover the areas in your life that He desires to change and how He wants you to love Him. Pray that any obstacles that are preventing you from giving your heart to God be removed to make room for the Living Water of the Holy Spirit. Pray for the affections of your heart to be renewed and to reflect God and His ways.

Challenge: As you go through the week, stop and think about how God walks with you. Is it evident that you are a new creation in Christ? In the areas of your life in which you're struggling, pray and ask God what promises can you lean on for strength. While you're having your morning coffee, sitting in traffic, or mowing the lawn, thank Him for the promise of new life and think of practical ways that you can use to show your gratitude. Is it getting baptized? Starting a small group? Getting involved with Serve Day on April 10th? Don't wait! Move forward in the strength of the Holy Spirit, believe His promise, and receive His promise.

Prayer Request and Prayer

Lord, we thank you for the gift of your Son, who died for us so that we can live with you, and who rose from the dead after paying the price for our sins. Thank you for the promise of the Holy Spirit because through that, we can walk with and live for you every day. For any areas in which we struggle to believe your Word or that we try to hide from you, we hand them over to you and pray for peace in knowing that your promises never fail. We invite you to come into our lives, wholeheartedly. We ask for you to move us into action - help us desire to do more than just believe. Give us joy, encouragement, and peace as we let you have our hearts and start living the new life you've given us. We love you Lord, and we praise you, Amen.