



Sermon Text: Acts 1:6-11

Sermon Date: July 23, 2017

In our passage, Jesus gives his followers their marching orders—to make disciples everywhere by exalting Christ in everything. We walked through the passage by seeing it in four sections.

THE KINGDOM MISUNDERSTOOD – VERSE 6

In the 40 days following His resurrection, Jesus had been teaching his disciples about “the kingdom of God” (v. 3); nevertheless, they were still operating with a faulty paradigm. They were expecting a **political kingdom**. They wanted Jesus to “restore” the political kingdom David once had by removing Roman oppression and ruling in Rome’s place. They also were expecting a **national kingdom**, with Jesus restoring the kingdom to “Israel.” Third, they expected an **immediate kingdom**, with Jesus establishing his kingdom “at this time.”

THE KINGDOM CORRECTED – VERSES 7-8

After challenging their right to know the times and seasons God has established in His sovereignty, Jesus corrects their misunderstanding of the kingdom of God. First, the kingdom is a **spiritual kingdom**. As Stott says, “The kingdom of God is his rule set up in the lives of his people by the Holy Spirit.” By the Spirit’s power, the apostles were to bear witness to Christ and the truth of the gospel. Second, it is an **international kingdom**. The good news of the gospel is to spread from Jerusalem into Judea and Samaria and out to the ends of the earth. Third, Christ’s kingdom is a **gradual kingdom**. It won’t come in an instant, but it spreads gradually as the Spirit awakens faith in the hearts of God’s people when they hear the gospel message.

THE KING ASCENDED – VERSE 9

Jesus’ last words on earth are words of mission. He then ascends to Heaven. Christ ascends to Heaven **visibly**. Five times in verses 9-11, Luke stresses that Christ’s ascension was seen. Christ also ascended **bodily**. Jesus—God and man—ascended to Heaven and presently sits enthroned in power. Third, Christ ascended **gloriously**. The cloud of God’s glorious presence, visible at critical moments in Israel’s history, escorts Jesus from the disciples’ view.

THE ANGELS’ CORRECTION – VERSES 10-11

As the disciples stare off into the sky, suddenly two angels stand beside them. An implied rebuke is heard in the angels’ question, “... why do you stand looking into heaven?” Stott says, “There was something fundamentally anomalous about their gazing up into the sky when they had been commissioned to go to the ends of the earth. It was the earth not the sky which was to be their preoccupation.” In other words, the angels are saying, “**Get on with it!**” In addition, the angels also reveal that **Christ will return**. “This Jesus” will return personally, still possessing his glorified human nature and body. He will return “in the same way” he left—both visibly and gloriously. Until he returns, the church has a mission. That mission of bearing witness to Christ extends to the ends of the earth and to the end of the age.

APPLICATION: TWO GREAT TEMPTATIONS

In the disciples’ actions we can see two great temptations that confront the church. First, there is **the secular church**—setting out to accomplish God’s work in the world’s way. We can try to establish the kingdom politically or try to fashion Christ so that he fits the expectations of society. Second, there is **the sedentary church**, which is content to stare off into heaven idly when there is kingdom-work to be done on earth. Instead of these two temptations, we must strive to be **the sent church**, striving to please our King by devoting ourselves to his final commission.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from this Sunday?
2. Of the two temptations mentioned, which one do you most struggle with personally? What about our church corporately?
3. Why is it important for us to remember that Jesus’ last earthly words centered upon the church on mission?