
Witness Unhindered:
“God’s Church for His Mission”
 Acts 1: 1-11

Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:

“It is not so much the case that God has a mission for his church in the world, as that God has a church for his mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church; the church was made for mission – God’s mission . . . We ask, “Where does God fit into the story of my life?” when the real question is, “Where does my little life fit into the great story of God’s mission?”

– Christopher Wright

“In his earthly career, Jesus changed the world but he didn’t perfect it. He healed many sick people, but not everybody. He cast out some demons, but not all. So far as we know, he turned water into wine only at Cana. He invited just one disciple to walk on water, with mixed results. So in his first advent, Jesus did much but he also left much to do.”

– Cornelius Plantinga

“We must not lag behind the king in some kind of unwarranted pessimism as though his first coming and present reign do not make a difference. We must not run ahead of the king in some kind of unwarranted triumphalism as though we’re going to make utopia here before he comes again. We keep in step with the king.”

– David Jones

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

- What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Are there lingering questions to be answered or rabbit trails to be followed for you?
- In the quotation above, Plantinga highlights the fact that Jesus’s ministry was somewhat partial, selective, and unfinished.
 - Does that puzzle or frustrate you? Why would Jesus not simply make it all better, all at once?
 - How does the intentionally “unfinished” and “continuing” work of Jesus strike you? When have you experienced the wonder of being included in that work and the dignity of participation?
 - When Jesus tells us that we, his disciples, will do even greater works than he did, what comes to mind for you? What on earth does he mean?
- What is the difference between asking “Where does God fit into the story of my life?” and “Where does my life fit into God’s mission?” How do you see your life fitting into God’s mission? How has that changed over the years for you?
- Where do you want to see the power of the Holy Spirit transforms and enable your life, the life of our church, and the furtherance of the Kingdom of God? What aspects of mission terrify you to the point of absolutely needing the power of the Holy Spirit?
- How are you battling the pessimism associated with Jesus’ not-yet kingdom? In what areas of your life do you want to be more “in step with the King”? What areas or relationships provide that sense of being in step with the king?