



**CALVARY**  
TUSCALOOSA

**TEACHING PLAN**  
AUGUST 27, 2017

# CALVARY TUSCALOOSA

ACTS 1:3-8

AUGUST 27, 2017

TEACHING PLAN

---

## PREPARATION

- > Spend the week reading through and studying Acts 1:3-8 and John 16:12-15. Consult the commentary provided and any additional study tools (such as a concordance or Bible dictionary) to enhance your preparation.
- > Determine which discussion points and questions will work best with your group.
- > Pray for our pastor, the upcoming group meeting, your teaching, your group members, and their receptivity to the study.

## HIGHLIGHTS

**BIBLICAL EMPHASIS:** The church is a movement of God centered on Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit and will have no end until Jesus returns at the close of history.

---

**TEACHING AIM:** Being a part of a movement is far more compelling than being a part of a meeting.

---

**GOSPEL CONNECTION:** John 16:12-15—The Spirit of God has been and continues to lead a movement toward rescue and restoration of all things through the work of Jesus Christ.

---

---

## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to help get the conversation going.*

Notes:

- 1 When you are working on a project, is it more important for you to know what you are doing, or why you are doing it? Explain.
  
- 2 How does knowing *what* you are doing help you accomplish your goal?
  
- 3 How does knowing *why* help you accomplish your goal?

The past few weeks we have looked at what the church is and seen that it is a group of people united by a shared belief in Jesus. It is not a physical location or a building. Instead, it is a community of people who have been changed by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, we also need to understand *why* the church exists. The church exists to be a movement of people dedicated to uniting people back to the God who created them and loves them. Understanding the *what* and *why* make the church more compelling. The church should be a movement of God for the welfare of the world.

## UNDERSTANDING

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

> Have a volunteer read Acts 1:3-8.

<sup>3</sup> *After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke*

---

*about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup> On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup> For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” <sup>6</sup> So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Notes:

- If you had a message that you wanted many people to hear and believe, how would you go about helping people hear and believe that message?
- Does anything about the way Jesus chose to reach the world with the gospel surprise you? Explain.

In the opening verses of Acts, Luke points out that this book would be a continuation of all that Jesus did. The Gospel of Luke is volume 1, and Acts is volume 2; it essentially picks up where Luke left off. Jesus, risen from the dead, is with His small band of disciples that He had invested His life in, teaching them and helping them see the significance of all that happened. Jesus' plan to reach the world was to invest in a small community of believers who He then expected to change the world, equipped by His Spirit. In a day with massive digital and social media marketing, this strategy might seem strange to us, but Jesus believed that real movements start in community, so here we see Him continue to foster community with the disciples.

- Verse 4 describes how Jesus began to focus in on His plans for His disciples. What does the question in verse 6 reveal about the disciples' misunderstanding of Jesus' plans?

Notes:

- How did Jesus respond to their misunderstanding? What did He realize about the human heart?
- How have you misunderstood Jesus' direction in your life?

The disciples expected Jesus, now risen in power, to come with an army and overthrow the Roman government. They expected a political insurrection. In essence, they were looking to worldly power to accomplish a God-sized goal. Once again, they had misunderstood Jesus' direction. He didn't come to bring a military movement, but a spiritual one that had even greater power than the disciples could imagine. Jesus understood that we see the world with a limited perspective. To truly see the movement of God, we need help from His Spirit.

- What was the key ingredient Jesus promised to help turn this meeting of men into a movement of God? How do we underestimate Jesus' methods even still today?

- 
- How can we make the Spirit of God a vital and integral part of our community together?

### Notes:

The movement that Jesus started would be dependent upon the power that He promised in verse 8. It was not for the disciples to know when Jesus would give them what they desired (v. 7), it was for them to be obedient and go as witnesses in the power of God's Spirit working through them.

Jesus promised that the Spirit would give them power. This is the same Spirit that Jesus had promised would "guide [them] into all truth" (John 16:13). His power is what makes the church a movement.

> Have a volunteer read John 16:12-15.

*<sup>12</sup> "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. <sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.*

- Why couldn't Jesus tell the disciples everything? What kept them from being ready to hear? How did Jesus' words here echo His words in Acts 1:7?
  
- How did Jesus describe the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

The disciples were already overwhelmed and fearful. Jesus knew they could not handle anymore at that time. That is why the Spirit would be their Guide—He would teach them and reveal to them God’s purposes and plan.

Notes:

- How would you explain the way the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work together, especially as it relates to our mission?
  
- What tools does the Holy Spirit use to guide us? How do we tap into His guidance as a community of faith?

Jesus described the work of the Trinity as the Holy Spirit glorifying Him, as He and the Father share that glory. The Spirit is God. It is only in His guidance that we can live out a life that glorifies the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We connect with the Spirit’s guidance in three ways. First, He guides us through the study of Scripture where He reveals the truths of God to us. The Spirit never leads contrary to Scripture. Second, the Holy Spirit uses our prayers to guide us as He assures us of the promises of God. Finally, the Spirit speaks through fellow believers who have wisdom from years of walking with Him.

All three of these methods come together in small group community. This is why we believe in the power of small groups to change lives. As the Spirit moves through our groups and in our world, lives will be changed by the gospel. All we have to do is tell others about what the Spirit is teaching us.

---

## APPLICATION

*Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.*

Notes:

- 1 What do we miss when we are content to do all the activities of church without seeking the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit? How will you seek Him this week?
- 2 How integral is your participation in this community to your understanding of what church is? Do you know anyone who may not want to go to church, but would come to a group like this? When will you invite them?
- 3 As we have talked about the power of community through small groups over the last month, what has God confirmed in your heart? How have you been challenged?

## PRAY

Praise God for building His church and uniting us together by His Spirit. Pray that we would trust and love His Spirit more than our own methods. Ask that He would show us the unique power given to us in the Spirit so that we could embrace our role in His mission to reach all people with the gospel.

## MEMORIZE

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority." –Acts 1:7



## ACTS 1:3-8

1:3. What did Jesus say during these question sessions? From everything we know, he used the Old Testament to emphasize that he was the Messiah Israel expected. Now he would turn the reins of responsibility over to the apostles and other believers. Jesus' life on earth was finished, but his work had only begun; the disciples now assumed the responsibility to carry on Jesus' work. We should never forget the full title of our book—"Acts of the Apostles"—though many have suggested it could more properly be titled "The Continuing Acts of Jesus Christ through the Apostles."

Notes:

Luke uses the phrase "kingdom of God" throughout Acts as a summary for God's work in the world. We should not confuse it with references either in the Old Testament or in other New Testament books. Jesus' teaching did not center on prophecy alone but on the ongoing role of the King on earth through his people.

1:4-5. What would these disciples do after the Lord left them? The first command was to wait. They were not to engage in ministry until they had been empowered by the gift my Father promised. As we read words like this in the Bible, we're reminded of the great history of the church that has preceded us and the resources he has provided to continue that heritage.

Jesus taught the disciples, the disciples taught people of their generation, who taught others, until today you and I have both the opportunity and responsibility to enjoy the gift and to tell others about it. In this case the gift is not just the gospel in general, but the specific coming of the Holy Spirit. This was not a new theme. Jesus had talked about it in John 14:16-21; 15:26-27; 16:7-15.

---

Believers are somewhat divided on the terminology “baptism of the Holy Spirit.” To argue that issue in detail here is beyond the scope of this work. Certainly Luke had in view that as the New Testament church got under way, Spirit baptism placed believers into that group of believers the New Testament calls the body of Christ.

Notes:

Throughout the Book of Acts we will see different reactions when people receive the Holy Spirit so we should not conclude that any one particular pattern is the only way God deals with us. The coming of the Holy Spirit took place ten days after Jesus’ ascension at which time the believers experienced the same power in which Jesus carried out his ministry.

What a lesson for us... wait. Don’t rush off into ministry unprepared. Don’t carry on the Lord’s work in the strength of the flesh. The only way we can fulfill Christ’s command to witness is to be under control of the Holy Spirit who energizes us for service.

1:6-7. The disciples’ question revived their political goals, an ideal they could never quite stifle. Throughout the Gospels they wanted Jesus to throw off the iron hand of Rome, tell the nation he was their Messiah, and set up the kingdom. Surely now that he had risen from the dead and instructed his troops, it was time for the rebellion to begin. The Lord’s answer offers a warning Christians have not heeded very well for almost two thousand years: It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority (v. 7).

The time was not revealed to Jesus’ own disciples at the time of the ascension, and it will never be known by any human until the Lord comes again, regardless of what someone may claim.

---

We can't criticize the disciples too much, however, because the Old Testament links Spirit baptism with the coming kingdom (Isa. 32:15-20; Ezek. 39:28-29; Joel 2:28-3:1). The Lord did not deny the kingdom is coming but only warned the disciples that God's schedule is none of their business.

Notes:

1:8. Some have suggested that this key verse of our book may contain a three fold table of contents: Jerusalem, Acts 2:42-8:3; Judea and Samaria, Acts 8:4-12:24; ends of the earth, Acts 12:25-28:31. We cannot know if Luke had that kind of division in mind, but the book unfolds in a fascinating manner somewhat along that pattern.

Notice that the call to witness is not limited to any select group of people since it spreads from the apostles to the 120 believers and on throughout the pages of Acts. Nor can we restrict it only to service in our own churches or to some kind of "professional ministry." Every believer should be a "world Christian," able to function for the Savior from the other side of the street to the other side of the world.

## JOHN 16:12-15

16:12-13. Verse 12 is a good example of progressive revelation—the principle that God does not dump all truth at one time and expect us to remember it but teaches us truths as we need to know them. The Bible itself is the greatest example of this as we read God's progressive unfolding of the plan of salvation from Genesis to Revelation. Does the phrase more than you can now bear mean the disciples were not able to understand everything or that they could not accomplish necessary ministry without the Holy Spirit's help? We should probably conclude that both were true. But when the

Counselor comes, it will be a different situation. He will teach God's truth to believers.

Some people see this passage relating only to the revelatory work of the Spirit in the lives of those who wrote the New Testament. Certainly that is in view, but there is a broader emphasis here on illumination as well as revelation—the Spirit of God enabling us to understand what others have written about God's truth. How often Jesus told anyone who would listen that he had no personal agenda, no particular message of his own. He had been sent by the Father and would proclaim only the Father's truth. Now he said exactly the same thing about the Holy Spirit.

Notes:

All truth is God's truth and it comes to us through creation, through the person of Jesus, and through the Scriptures.

16:14-15. When truth is communicated and believed, it brings glory to God. More specifically, the Holy Spirit, the Counselor, will glorify the Son of God by telling Christians even more about God's truth than Jesus had time to do during his brief years on earth. These verses are fulfilled repeatedly when people in our day read the writings of Paul or Peter and know more about Jesus because the Holy Spirit first revealed it and now explains it.