



## TABLE TALK

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE for May 22-May 28, 2022

WEEKLY READINGS: Acts 1:1-11; John 14:12-14; Ephesians 4:7-16; Mark 16:15-20; Colossians 2:15; Psalm 110

### ACTS IN 30 Series Overview: *The Ascension, Descension, and Great Commission*

"The Book of Acts has so much to say to our half-hearted and cold-blooded Christianity in the western world. It rebukes our preoccupation with buildings and ministerial pedigree, our syncretism and pluralism, our lack of expectancy and vibrancy. **As such it (The Book of Acts) is a book supremely relevant for our time.**"

-Dr. Michael Green, *Thirty Years that Changed the World: The Book of Acts for Today*

FOCUS: READ Acts 1:8-10

**Ascension:** The Messiah Sits at God's Right Hand of Authority to Empower His Church

*"But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my **witnesses** in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* (Acts 1:8)

**BIG IDEA 1** – After witnessing to more than 500 people about His resurrection for 40 days (Acts 1:3), Jesus tells His disciples that now THEY will be His witnesses on Earth. The geographical pattern Jesus tells them in Acts 1:8 is described exactly in that order throughout the Book of Acts. While speaking, Jesus ascends into Heaven where the Bible says He is now seated at **God's right hand** (Mark 16:19; Eph. 1:20; Romans 8:34; I Peter 3:22). Throughout Scripture, the "right hand" refers to a place of honor, authority, and power in a Kingdom. Christ's **ascension** positions Him to delegate that power on earth today.

**Q1-** Have you ever been a "**witness**" to God's power working in some way before? If so, what was the situation and how did that experience affect you?

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FOCUS: Ephesians 4:9-12

**Descension:** The Messiah Conquers Death, Hell and the Grave and Gives Gifts to His Church

*"Therefore, it is said, When He **ascended** on high, He led captivity captive [He led a train of vanquished foes] and He bestowed gifts on men.[But He ascended?] Now what can this, He ascended, mean but that He had previously **descended** from [the heights of] heaven into [the depths], the lower parts of the earth?"* (Ephesians 4:8-9, AMPC)

**BIG IDEA 2** – In this passage, the Apostle Paul could be referring to the idea that after His Crucifixion, Jesus descended into the lower parts of the earth (I Pet. 3:18-22) and "**took captivity captive.**" Jesus plundered His enemies and "**disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame**" (Col. 1:15). Not only did Jesus bind up His foes, He **released gifts** to humanity in the form of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors & Teachers to equip His Church for ministry (Eph. 4:12)

**Q2-** What does it mean to you that Jesus "**took captivity captive**" after His crucifixion? Why are giving gifts to humanity in the form of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors & Teachers important for the Church?

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FOCUS: Mark 16:15-20

**Commission:** The Messiah Authorizes His Church to Now Demonstrate His Power on Earth

*"When the Lord Jesus had finished talking with them, he was taken up into heaven and sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. And **the disciples** went everywhere and preached, and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs."* (Mark 16:19-20, NLT)

**BIG IDEA 3** – Mark's gospel account of Christ's ascension focuses attention on the fact that it was now the DISCIPLES turn to teach, preach, heal, deliver and set people free through Christ's power the same way Jesus did while He was on earth. Jesus Himself said, "**anyone** who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father." (John 14:12).

**Q3-** Do you believe that as a disciple of Jesus Christ now YOU have access to Christ's power and authority to do the same – if not greater – works than He did while He walked the earth? Why or why not?

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