

Marks of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading
Giving Time, Talents & Resources ■ Spiritual
Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

January 29, 2023

Day 1: Acts 1:6

So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

This question is on the minds of Christians when they meet together for worship. In the Lord's Prayer we always ask for the Kingdom to come. We know that it will come in God's time but we still want that time of peace for all to come now. When we find ourselves wishing for the time of peace to come now, it is usually in a time of distress and it is a prayer from the heart.

Question: What is the longest you had to wish for something?

Challenge: Pray the Lord's Prayer very slowly. Stop at each word and think about what it means.

Scripture: II Samuel 7:1-17

Day 2: Acts 1:7

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

The hardest words in the English language (or any language) are "have patience." We are not disposed to wait for much of anything. If what we are waiting for is something really good then our patience is even less. Yet, if we knew the answer to the question "when," we might just sit around without doing anything. Our patience should be active waiting. We wait for God to tell us what to do but the waiting is preparing us for when we are called to act.

Question: Do you know when you were born? The date, time, day of the week, and place?

Challenge: What do you think of the concept of "active waiting" and how would you explain it?

Scripture: Isaiah 41:1-9

Day 3: Acts 1:8

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."

There is power that comes from the sun or a waterfall. There is power from the atom or another source of energy. There is power that comes from an idea or belief. Yet none of these or any other power we could mention was involved in the creation of the world. The Holy Spirit is a unique power source because it has the ability to give life. Jesus does not want us to go forth with the message of the Gospel until we are powerful.

Question: What is the most powerful thing in the world?

Challenge: Find a map so that you can identify Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria.

Scripture: I Thessalonians 1:1-10

Day 4: Acts 1:9

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Jesus spent 40 days after the Resurrection visiting the disciples at various times. He waited to ascend because the disciples had to be firm in their belief that He overcame death. The shock of His death was great and they might have thought the Resurrection was just wishful thinking or their imagination. Jesus did eventually leave them because He knew that they could carry on His mission. Jesus has confidence in us today to carry out His mission of teaching, healing and preaching. In

short, to be the light to the world.

Question: What was the hardest goodbye you ever had to make?

Challenge: How can you tell someone that you trust them enough to leave them alone?

Scripture: Luke 24:36-53

Day 5: Acts 1:10-11

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

The start of a wedding is about the hardest part of the service. Certain beginnings are such that there is no going back so we are reluctant to start even if we want to go on the journey. We are afraid of beginnings that are endings because we have to move into new territory. We do not know the path so we can only keep going if we are assured that A) God is with us and B) God is in the future waiting for us.

Question: What is the strangest thing you have ever seen in the sky?

Challenge: What do you think about the concept of the return of Jesus?

Scripture: I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Day 6: Acts 1:13-14

When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Prayer is a critical first step before we make any decisions. The disciples and the other women all gathered in the upper room before they went about their next move. They believed that God would show them what their next move should be. God did not disappoint them. God did show them what to do next and with each move thereafter. They never felt that Jesus was far off but rather they could sense his presence in their midst.

Question: Do you pray before making an important decision?

Challenge: If you came into the room where all these early followers were, what three questions would you ask them?

Scripture: Luke 6:1-49