

Acts 1:1-11

April 27, 2025



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?
- What Scripture has been shaping you recently?
- Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?
- What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?
- What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?
- What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?
- What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Witnesses

Objective: Be the "witness" who accurately tells the story to the most people within three minutes.

How to play:

1. Set Up:

- In a separate room, set up a series of events using items you have.
- Example: Set up a board game, pour a cup with half full of one soda and then top it off with another, stack up three books, and cheer for your favorite team.

2. Select Witnesses:

- Choose one girl and one guy to be the "witnesses."
- They will watch the events and then tell others what they saw.

3. Watch & Remember:

- Witnesses come into the room, observe the events, and remember them.
- After they watch the events, set a timer for three minutes.

4. Share the Events:

- The girl "witness" tells the girls in the group what she saw.

- b. The guy “witness” tells the guys in the group what he saw.
- c. They must share individually, without others hearing.

5. Write & Submit:

- a. Students who hear the events write them down quickly on a piece of paper.
- b. Submit the papers into a girls’ or guys’ bucket.

6. Winning:

- a. When the timer runs out, count the papers in each bucket, quickly checking for correctness.
- b. The “witness” who has correctly shared the story the most times wins!

Teaching Moment: In our game today, we had two witnesses in charge of telling people what happened in the other room. We start the book of Acts today, and in the very first chapter, Jesus tells the disciples that they will be His witnesses in charge of telling other people about Him.

DISCUSSION

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 1:1-11.

What does this passage say Jesus did before He returned to heaven (also called the ascension)?

Why might Luke want to share the truth in verse 3 early in this account?

What command did Jesus give in verse 4?

Why was it important for Jesus’s followers to receive the Holy Spirit?

What did Jesus’s followers ask Him about in verse 6? How might this show they still didn’t understand Jesus’s purposes in the world?

What happened with Jesus in this passage?

What did the disciples do? Why do you think they reacted this way?

What were they told in verse 11? How does this apply to us today?

GOING DEEPER

What is our modern Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria?

What is challenging about the call to live as witnesses? What is empowering about it?

APPLICATION

How does Acts 1:8 apply to us? What does it mean to be Jesus's witness in 2025?

Why is the whole body of Christ important for carrying out Jesus's call to live as witnesses to the world?

Who can you share with about the ascension today?

PRAYER

Thank God for preserving the events of the early church for us in the book of Acts. Praise Him for His victory over death and for the promise of Jesus's return. Ask Him for help as you seek to be Jesus's witnesses today.

LOOKING AHEAD

Encourage your group to look ahead as we continue the series on Acts next week.

May 4, 2025 --- Acts 1:12-26

COMMENTARY

Acts 1:1-11

Literary Prologue (1:1-2).

The first two verses of Acts link the book with the Gospel, Luke's "first book," and give a brief summary of the Gospel's contents—Jesus' deeds and His teaching, up to the time of His ascension. Like the Gospel (Luke 1:3), the book is dedicated to "Theophilus," who may have been a real person (perhaps a new Christian) or may have been a symbolic name. (The Greek means "lover of God.")

Preparations for Pentecost (1:3-5).

After Jesus' death and resurrection, He appeared to His disciples over a forty-day period. During this time, He gave them "convincing proofs" that He was

alive. These became important as they bore witness to His resurrection. He also instructed them about the kingdom of God. Most likely He opened up to them the Old Testament Scriptures about the Messiah. His scriptural interpretation would become important for the Christian preaching to the Jews. Finally, Jesus instructed the disciples to wait for the Spirit in Jerusalem.

Call to Witness (1:6–8).

The disciples wondered if Jesus' resurrection heralded the immediate coming of God's kingdom. They asked Him in rather narrow nationalistic terms if God was getting ready to "restore the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus rejected both their concern for determining the date and their Jewish exclusivism. He replaced both concerns with a worldwide mission. When the kingdom comes is not our concern. What we do until it comes is: we are to be His witnesses. The witness is to be worldwide. Acts ends with Paul's ministry in the city of Rome, the capital of the Empire. Some would see "ends of the earth" as referring to Rome. Its meaning in the Old Testament prophets is "far distant lands," and that is probably what Jesus intended. The disciples were not to begin the witness yet — only after they had been empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Ascension of Christ (1:9–11).

Only Luke relates Jesus' ascension, here and in his Gospel (Luke 24:51). Jesus was caught up in a cloud and taken from the disciples' view. In the Bible, clouds are often associated with appearances of God, as at Mount Sinai and at Jesus' transfiguration (Luke 9:28–36). The two men in white were angels, divine messengers. They assured the disciples that Jesus would one day return on the clouds just as they had seen Him depart. For the disciples, the ascension meant their forty-day communion with the risen Christ was now at an end. He would not join them in the upper room again. For us, the ascension is a reminder that Christ has risen to the right hand of God and rules as Lord of our lives. It also assures us of the certainty of His return—on the clouds of heaven, just as He departed this earth.