

w/b 8th March 2015

THEME: WAITING FOR THE ARRIVAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Desmond Egharevba)

INTRODUCTION: This study follows Desmond preaching to us on the importance of both waiting for and being led by the Holy Spirit in all that we do.

PASSAGE: ACTS CH 1 vs 1-11.

Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven

¹ *In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach*
² *until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.* ³ *After his suffering, he presented himself to them 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.* ⁴ *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.* ⁵ *For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."*

⁶ *Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"*

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

⁹ *After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.*

¹⁰ *They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.* ¹¹ *"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."*

LAUNCH

- Describe a time when you were very excited about waiting for a present or a gift that you were expecting to receive. How did you feel whilst waiting for it to arrive and how did you feel on receiving it?
- How might you have responded if you were one of the disciples that Jesus appeared to and that you had then been given an instruction to wait and pray? Why would you have responded in this way?

DISCOVERY

- As we read through this passage the Holy Spirit seems to be 'tagged' in a number of different ways? What different qualities do we learn about him?
- What difference might these qualities make if they were applied to our lives today? (i.e. we were full of the Spirit)

UNDERSTANDING

- *'The Holy Spirit is not in our employ; we are in his ... We must let him work on his terms and schedule. We cannot manipulate his power or program his activities. But because he is Lord, we must be open to whatever he wants to do, receptive to whatever gifts he sends, responsive to whatever priorities he sets'* D Hubbard
- What bits of this quote do you agree or disagree with and why?
- Can you think of a time that you charged ahead without really thinking to pray and ask the Spirit to lead you? What were the consequences?
- John Ortberg in his book 'it all goes back in the box' described hurry sickness as being one of the huge problems facing the Western world today. What is your particular version of hurry sickness? How can you address it in order to free up more God time?
- Does anyone have a big decision to make or does the group have a particular plan that they want to pursue? What might appropriate waiting and dependence on the Spirit look like in achieving this decision/plan?
- If we were to see more of the life of the Holy Spirit in either your group or the church, what might this look like?

APPLICATION

Allow unhurried time to pray for one another to be refreshed and refilled with the Holy Spirit. Allow space for prophecy ensuring it is weighed and handled well. Pray for clarity in receiving his direction, strength in following up on it and power in reaching out to the world around with the truth of Jesus Christ.