



Week 3

These weekly studies are loosely based on the previous Sunday's sermon. If you missed it, you will find a recording on our website (www.knaphillbaptist.org.uk). They are designed for both Home Group discussion and/or personal reflection. Don't necessarily try to cover all the questions and discussion topics in your group at one sitting. You may like to think about them later in your own time.



WAITING IN THE CITY

Read Luke 24:45-53

This is the third in a series of studies tracing the Journey from Easter to Pentecost as told by Luke in his two books: *The Gospel of Luke*, and the follow-up volume, *The Acts of the Apostles*. In this part of the story we see the Risen Jesus opening the minds of his disciples so that they could get to grips with the teaching of Scripture, particularly their calling to go and preach the Gospel to the nations, and to do so in the power of the promised Holy Spirit rather than relying on their own efforts or eloquence (vs.45-49). Luke's Gospel concludes with a brief account of Jesus' Ascension (vs.50-53) – something he will expand on in volume II of his story (Acts 1:1-11) – underlining that this promised coming of the Holy Spirit was still some time away and that the disciples need to use this time to wait prayerfully (and expectantly) on God to be 'clothed with power from on high' (v.49).

Questions and Pointers for Discussion/Reflection

1. Jesus 'opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures' (v.45). Luke tells us that during Paul's Second Missionary Journey, although the Bereans received Paul's message eagerly, they also 'examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true' (Acts 17:11). Paul himself also exhorts Timothy to 'correctly handle the Word of Truth' (2 Timothy 2:15). What do we learn from all this?
2. 'Our problems do not lie with the doctrine of the *inspiration* of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16,17), but with the *interpretation* of Scripture!' Do you agree with this statement? Unpack it.
3. It is suggested that what we have here in vs.46,47 is the heart or essence of the Gospel. Do you agree? What is the heart and essence of the Gospel according to Jesus here? What does it mean? Why is it so important?
4. Jesus tells us here that all who 'name the Name' of Christ, all who claim to be his true disciples, are 'witnesses of these things' (v.48). What things? What does it mean to be a 'witness'? We are all called to be 'witnesses' but we are not all called to be 'evangelists'! Do you agree with this statement? What is the difference?
5. What three things do we learn from v.49 about the Gift of the Holy Spirit? [Here is a clue if you are struggling to work this out: promise, prayer, power].
6. Immediately prior to his Ascension Jesus led his disciples to Bethany and 'lifted up his hands and blessed them' (v.50). What does this mean? [NB. In the Old Testament the blessing of the man or woman of God was much sought after. Can you give examples of this?]. The Rev Eric Lavender used to ask his fellow Christians if they were 'in the blessing'? (This was very annoying, especially if you weren't!). Are *you* 'in the blessing'?
7. Why is the Ascension of Jesus (v.52) so important? Where is Jesus now? (see Acts 7:55,56; Matthew 28:20). What is he doing? (see Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 24:36, etc).

Isaiah tells us that 'Those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength, they will rise up with wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint' (Isaiah 40:31). What does it really mean to 'wait upon the Lord'? How does this apply to what Jesus is saying to us here in v.49?