

WARM-UP

- Who are the people you draw confidence from? Share an instance showing this.
- Do you have friendships that have lasted for years? How do you think that happened?
- What would you want to be doing until the day you die? Why?

WORD *⁴⁴Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures . . .* **LUKE 24:44-45**

At around this time, the disciples had been walking with Jesus for three years. They had seen miracle after miracle and many people getting saved. Then Jesus was arrested, died, and had been resurrected. What a crazy journey indeed. Jesus had come as was prophesied in Scripture and fulfilled all that the Father had planned in order to save humanity. But since Jesus would now be ascending into heaven, the question was, would the disciples continue His ministry? Today, let's look at what we can learn from Jesus' last words to Peter and the other disciples about how they would continue their discipleship journey and stay on mission together.

1 | We are recipients of God's grace.

⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead . . ." LUKE 24:45-46

As followers of Jesus, the disciples were one of the very first recipients of Jesus' ministry—His teachings, His forgiveness, His miracles. After having been with Him for three years, now their minds were opened by Him so they could finally see and realize all Jesus said to them had come to pass. The salvation of humanity is here, and they are firsthand witnesses of this saving grace. Today, believers too have received and witnessed this grace in our lives and in those we journey with. How has receiving Jesus' saving grace changed your life?

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2 | We are messengers of God's grace.

⁴⁷ . . . and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things." LUKE 24:47-48

More than receiving His grace, the disciples were called to proclaim who Jesus is and what He has done for, in, and through them. The same goes for us. We who have been forgiven, reconciled to Him, and restored have been given this special privilege to extend this grace to others. And we do this not merely out of obligation, but because the love of

Christ compels us to share who He is to those we love and care about and even to the rest of the world (2 Corinthians 5:14). Who shared the message of God’s grace to you? How did he or she do it?

3 | We are sent with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

“And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

LUKE 24:49

These are Jesus’ last words to the disciples before He ascended into heaven. Because He was no longer going to be with them physically, He was sending the Holy Spirit—the promise of the Father—to be with His disciples as they continue His ministry. The Holy Spirit dwells in the people God set apart for Himself as our assurance and empowerment in doing the mission He called us to do together. Through the Holy Spirit’s presence in our lives, we are able to be His messengers and witnesses to the world. How does the Holy Spirit help us live out our identity and calling in Christ? (John 14:15–17, 26)

APPLICATION

- Jesus calls us to proclaim who He is and what He has done to the world. What might be some obstacles you encounter in doing so? What practical steps can you take to overcome these?
- In what ways have you lived without being reliant on the Spirit? How may you express your reliance on the Holy Spirit this week?
- With whom is God calling you to preach the gospel this week? Commit to pray for and set a schedule to meet up with this person.

PRAYER

- Thank God for showing you grace through Jesus Christ, for being with you, and for empowering you through the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- Ask God for open doors and opportunities to make Him known to your family and friends. Pray that their hearts would be ready to receive Him.
- Pray for the ways God can use you to help others, even those you do not like, to know Him. Ask Him for compassion, patience, love, and joy as you relate with others.



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