

Introduction

To close out our Winter session of Life Groups, Pastor Bryan takes us on a flyover tour of the book of Acts as well as the continuation of the work begun by the Church of Acts. What a ride! Our hope is that your group time this week will be one of reflection and celebration about how we are *daring to be the Church*.

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over the questions below and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group.

Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

Here are some suggestions to get your conversation started:

1. What is a trip or experience that had a big spiritual impact on you and why?
2. How have you been challenged personally through this study in Acts?

Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
 - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
 - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
 - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you
 - 2) Invite someone to read the passage in the group.
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Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) Imagine that you are given an opportunity to write chapter 29 of the book of Acts, a narrative about Lincoln Berean Church in 2022. **What would be the title of your chapter? What role do you see our church playing in furthering the gospel here and now?**
- 2) Read Luke 24:46-49 and Acts 1:1-8 to review the mission Jesus gave to His Church. **Based on that, what do you think Jesus expects us to spend our time and resources pursuing as part of His local church?**

How does understanding the mission of the Church as an outpost of the kingdom of God inform the way you view various parts of your life? Discuss ways you might live on mission in each of these areas:

- Work
 - Relationships
 - Income and resources
 - Time management and priorities
- 3) If we're honest, most of us find it much easier to define the mission of the Church than to actually practice it in daily life. That's one way your Life Group can provide a safe place to help you focus each week. Think back over the past 10 weeks of this session and consider which of these questions relates to you. Share with the group.
 - **What has it meant to you to have a safe place to share your story with others?**
 - **When has your group helped you redirect negative thinking and instead focus on the Truth of God's Word?**
 - **How has praying for your concerns met a need in your life?**
 - **What new spiritual exercises have you tried that you want to continue?**
 - 4) From Acts onward, the Church has been about proclaiming the life-changing message of Jesus Christ to a lost and searching world. There's no greater witness to this message than seeing people from all walks of life coming together as a unified "body" to celebrate and worship Jesus in a weekend service. **As you've looked around our congregation in recent weeks, is there someone you've missed seeing in a service? While not everyone may be ready to return in person yet, what might you be able to do to reach out as part of the community of faith?**

- 5) Pastor Bryan’s recounting of the key movements of Church history can give us a greater appreciation for what we experience today. **Are you satisfied with how often you exercise the freedom you have to read your Bible? Explain your answer.**

What ways might it benefit our city to have a diversity of Bible-believing churches to choose to attend? What difference does it make when churches are united in sharing the gospel rather than competing for attendees?

Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?

Personal Spiritual Exercises

Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves – mind, body, spirit – we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts.

Setting Your Mind on the Truth – choose a verse or passage that speaks to a particular struggle or need in your life, then begin integrating it in a way that is meaningful to you.

Exercise 1: Write out Colossians 3:2 (or other verse of your choosing) and put it in your pocket, stick it on your mirror, or any place you see often throughout the day.

Exercise 2: Set your verse as wallpaper on your phone or computer. Many Bible apps have this feature; www.youversion.com, is one.

Whenever you find your thoughts drifting negatively, recite your chosen verse to set your mind back on the truth.