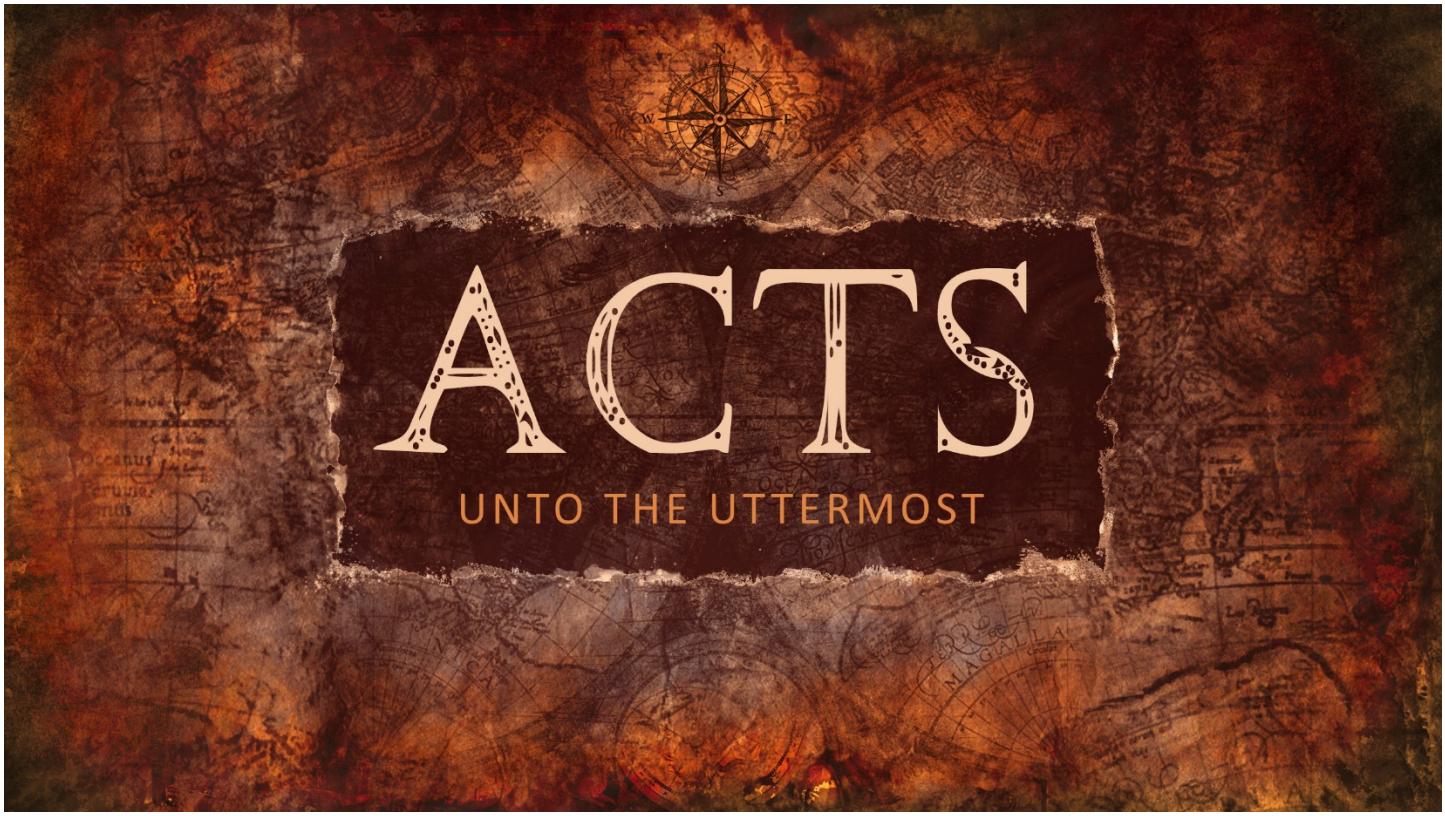

Session 1– Unto the Uttermost
Scripture: Acts 1:1-11
Subject: Sending
Central Theme: Disciples are Sent
Objective Statement: Jesus finished His discipleship process and earthly ministry by sending the disciples. Here are four factors that contributed to why they were sent.

Keyword:

1. The Resurrection Proven: Jesus is alive! (v.1-3)
2. The Remembered Promise: The Holy Spirit Indwells! (v.4-5,8)
3. The Redeemer Proclaimed: Unto the Uttermost! (v.6-8)
4. The Return Portrayed: Jesus will return! (v.9-11)

Introduction:

Connection:

- Famous last words…
    - I won't be gone a minute
    - I'm not ready yet
    - I won't forget
- It's interesting to know the last thing people say before they die.

- John Wayne died at age 72 in L.A. He turned to his wife and said, “Of course I know who you are. You’re my girl. I love you."
- Joseph Wright, a linguist, edited the English Dialect Dictionary. His last word? “Dictionary.”
- Frank Sinatra died after saying, “I’m losing it.”
- George Orwell's last written words were, “At 50, everyone has the face he deserves.” He died at age 46.

Tension:

- If people know that they are leaving, then their last words are usually pretty important to them.
- This is certainly the case with Jesus.
- He knew exactly what was going to happen. There was nothing accidental with Him.
- He had poured His life into people. His mission was to reach people, teach people, and minister to people.
- His method was to do that with His disciples. The Scripture says this about the 12:

Mark 3:13-14 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. (14) And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

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- He called them to Himself.
- He trained them.
- He sent them.
- This was his pattern while He trained them, and it was the pattern that He wanted us to repeat.
- Jesus pattern plan was to sending these guys all over the world- unto the uttermost part of the earth.
- Today I want you to see that…

Jesus finished His discipleship process and earthly ministry by sending the disciples. Here are four factors that contributed to why they were sent.

1. The Resurrection Proven: Jesus is alive! (v.1-3)

The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

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- The person speaking is the author of the book, Dr. Luke.

- The “treatise” to which he refers is the Gospel of Luke.
- The description is appropriate, as well. He says it was made “of all that Jesus began both to do and teach”.
- I think it is appropriate that He uses the word “began”, because as He writes this work, “the Acts of the Apostles”, we see what Jesus continues to do through His disciples in the world.
- We know that Jesus told them, “And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the earth.”
- Notice what He said about Jesus’ time after His resurrection:

Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

- The treatise that He had written contained Jesus’ life and ministry all the way up “until the day in which he was taken up”. This was described earlier in the Gospel of Luke, but we are about to get more detail.
- In between Jesus’ resurrection and His ascension he “through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen.” This was exactly what He had been doing.
- He was giving them last minute instructions, and He was also helping them to understand a proper Christology, or theology of Christ.
- He also wanted them to be adequate witnesses of the nature of His resurrection. Look at what Luke says in verse 3.

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(3) To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

- Luke says Jesus spent 40 days between His resurrection and His ascension physically with His apostles. During this time, they were a witness to His resurrected state, and to the scriptural evidence of how all of this was to come to pass.
- I believe a large portion of what we learn in the rest of the New Testament had its roots in these things that Jesus taught His disciples at this time.
- He spent His time with them “speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Application:

- Think about the discipleship process that Jesus had taken these guys through.
- He had showed them what it looked like to reach people, teach people, and minister to people.

- He had watched them reach people, teach people and, minister to people.
- He had coached them in what to do and not to do when it came to ministry.
- He had taught them the Scripture. He had given them the Word.
- He testified that they had kept His Word.
- He had then died and risen again to secure their salvation.
- At this point He was telling them that He was going to leave, and that they would be His witnesses.
- Witnesses to what? They were not just witnesses to His good character, His good teaching, His good morals, and His good methods. They were witnesses to His resurrection and all that it meant.
- "He showed Himself alive with many infallible proofs."
- But not only had He shown them ***that*** He was alive, He told them ***why*** He was alive. And the "why" necessitated that they be sent out.
- Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."
- It is said in Romans later, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." The resurrection of Jesus Christ is crucial in being saved.
- They were being sent because Jesus is alive.

Jesus finished His discipleship process and earthly ministry by sending the disciples. Here are four factors that contributed to why they were sent.

1. The Resurrection Proven: Jesus is alive! (v.1-3)

2. The Remembered Promise: The Holy Spirit Indwells! (v.4-5,8a)

And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

- Another reason that they were being sent was that they weren't going to go alone. In this verse Jesus tells them that they will receive the "promise of the Father".
- This was the promise He had made to them before. In John 15, Jesus told them this:

(15) If ye love me, keep my commandments. (16) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; (17) Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. (18) I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. (19) Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. (20) At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father,

and ye in me, and I in you.
John 14:15-20

- Jesus was telling them that when He left He would send His Spirit to dwell in them and the same applies to us.
- This is what Jesus alludes to next in verse 5:

(5)For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

- This is exactly what John the Baptist prophesied about Jesus in Luke 3:16.

Luke 3:16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

- John's baptism was a symbolic baptism of repentance.
- Jesus' ultimately would separate the whole world into two groups.
- There will be those baptized in the Spirit, and those baptized in the fire.
- Those who believe will be baptized, one time, at salvation, with the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

- Those who are not baptized in the Spirit, that have no indwelling Spirit, are not saved.
- Paul said this in Romans 8:9:

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.
Romans 8:9

- So, to be saved is to baptized in the Spirit. To have the Holy Spirit indwelling you.
- Those who are not saved, without the Holy Spirit will be baptized in fire.
- So, Jesus is sending them, and He is sending the Spirit for a reason:

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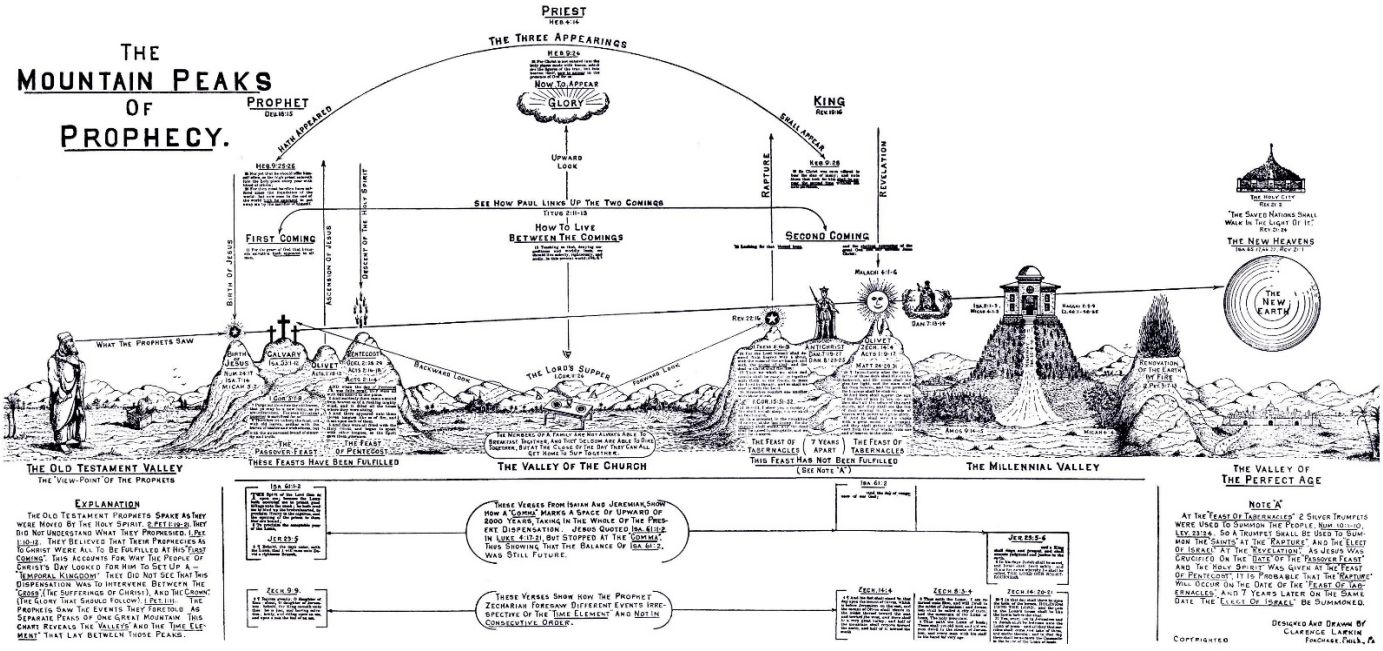
- Why were they baptized with the Spirit?

- Why were they sent with the Spirit?

3. The Redeemer Proclaimed: Unto the Uttermost! (v.6-8)

(6)When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

- Look how strongly the idea was engrained into these disciples the idea was that Jesus was a king ready to set up a kingdom.
- Remember the disciples arguing the night of the Lord's supper as to who would be greatest in the kingdom.
- Peter was picking up a sword to fight for Jesus, and I believe at least in part He had kingdom thinking in mind.
- Even after this 40 day Bible Study with Jesus, the disciples had eschatological or end times thinking in mind as they spent this time with Jesus.
- They had an Old Testament view-point of prophecy. They couldn't see the church age, although they were going to live in it and help make that transition.



- And so their question is, "Is it now?"

(7) And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

- Jesus tells them that it is not for them to know.
- God knows the future. God knows what will go on in human history.

- In fact, He is in control of it.
- And at some point, he will even reveal some what will happen to John, who is standing right there.
- But He essentially tells His disciples, at this moment at the end of His discipleship with them, what they ought to focus on.
- Don't focus on the kingdom being restored to Israel. That's for God to determine.
- You focus on this mission:

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(8) But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

- The Resurrection is proven. I am alive. Because I live you shall live also. There is life in Jesus Christ.
- The promise will be fulfilled. You will receive the Holy Spirit to empower you as you are sent.
- Why are you sent?
- You are to be my witnesses:
    - In Jerusalem
    - In Judea
    - In Samaria
    - And Unto the Uttermost part of the earth!
- What were they to testify as witnesses about? Luke already told us in the last chapter of Luke:

Luke 24:46-49 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: (47) And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (48) And ye are witnesses of these things. (49) And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

- They were not just being sent locally.
- They were not just being sent regionally.
- They were not just being sent nationally.
- They were being sent locally AND regionally AND nationally AND internationally.

- They were sent empowered by the Spirit, witnessing to the resurrected Christ who was crucified for the sins of the whole world.
- This is the pattern for us.
- The disciples were not told to simply convert all nations. They were told to make disciples of all nations.
- To be a disciple of Jesus Christ is to be sent to make disciples of every nation, tribe, tongue, and people!
- There is one more factor…

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(9) And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

- Imagine what that was like!
- I'm sure that at many points the disciples had thought, "That was so incredible, He'll never top that."
- Remember what happened with Nathanael:

John 1:47-50 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! (48) Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. (49) Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. (50) Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

- And they had seen greater things. One thing seemed to top the other.
    - People getting healed
    - Fish jumping into nets
    - The Blind receiving their sight
    - The storm being calmed

  - The dead being raised
  - And then the ultimate- Him rising from the dead Himself!
- And so I just imagine some of these guys hearing Jesus give them these last sending orders and all of a sudden He just starts rising.
- And there reaction must have been amazing.
- "Of course He's rising up to heaven…"
- "Did I really thing He was going to live to an old age and just die again? No, that's not the ending to this kind of story."
- It must have been something to see.
- Every head was lifted up, and every mouth must have been agape.
- They probably felt as if they were on Holy ground in that moment. We know in Luke it says that they were worshipping Him in that moment.
- But remember the whole point of this discipleship: Jesus had sent them. "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you"!
- God sent a couple of angels to prompt them:

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(10) And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

(11) Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

- Hey guys- It is not time to stop and stare. It is time to go!
- He is coming back!
- He is coming back!
- When? Soon!
- When? It could be today!
- When? It could be right now!
- His coming is imminent.
- So the angels were saying, "Don't stay here. You have been sent. Get to Jerusalem."
- Jesus had said something about His ministry that should impact us.

John 9:4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

- We are sent.

- Jesus is coming back!
- Are you excited?
- I can't wait until He comes back…
- But if He came back today, there may be some that we haven't "witnessed" to.
- The Lord is patient, and slow to anger, rich in love, good to all.
- You might be thinking- They heard that He was coming back and that was 2,000 years ago!
- One of the guys, Peter had something to say about that in 2 Peter 3:3-4.

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2 Peter 3:3-4 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, (4) And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

- He had this response:

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2 Peter 3:9-12 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (10) But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (11) Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, (12) Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

- We have been sent, and it's time to get busy.
- It's time to do the works of Him that sent us. The night is coming when no man can work!

Conclusion:

Jesus finished His discipleship process and earthly ministry by sending the disciples. Here are four factors that contributed to why they were sent.

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- Do you need more convincing that the aim and end of Jesus' discipleship was sending?

- Here are two more reasons:
    - 1. Do you know what these disciples were eventually called? Apostles. Do you know what the word apostle means? "Sent One".
    - 2. As we looked at the book of Luke for the last 6 months, we started out in December and we walked through the life of Jesus.
        - Luke starts out by talking about Jesus coming from the uttermost- coming from heaven.
        - Luke does not give us a lot of what happens in Jesus's early ministry near Judea. He tells us about Jesus' ministry starting in Galilee.
        - And as the book of Luke progresses it goes from Galilee, to Samaria, into Judea, and all the way to Jerusalem to it's climax on Calvary and the Garden tomb.
        - And if you look at Luke and Acts as two parts of 1 work, right here smack-dab in the middle of this great work is Acts 1:8:

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(8) But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

        - And those regions become the outline for the book of Acts.
        - Over the next few weeks we will see the apostles in the book of Acts proclaiming the resurrected Christ, in the power of the Spirit, right in the heart of Jerusalem.
        - And as persecution happens, and missions efforts are planned they go on to minister in Judea, and Samaria.
        - And then this guy who hates Christians, Saul, receives Christ and becomes Paul, and leaving out of Antioch goes all over the uttermost part of the earth starting churches by reaching people, baptizing them, making disciples and sending them to make more.
        - And the incredible thing about the book of Acts is that there is no conclusion.
        - It doesn't end.
        - There is no verse that says, "And that's how the whole thing got started. The end." Why?
        - Because the mission of God, given to Jesus, handed to to the apostles, has been sent to us.

- Disciples make disciples. Body's of baptized believers are called churches. Churches send out disciples to start new churches locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- And one day the Gospel came to you as it was on its way to someone else.
- And that is how the Gospel gets to the uttermost part of the earth.
- That's how the Gospel got to you. Findlay.