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Script References

Introduction

Alexis: Hey everyone, it's Alexis. Last session, Eli talked about how Jesus gave his life to restore us to God. But he did more than that. Jesus established a kingdom that is still going today. And that's what I'm talking about, the Kingdom of Heaven in the Here and Now.

After Jesus rose from the dead, he spent about 40 days with his followers. After that, he gathered his closest friends and said this to them before ascending back into heaven:

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Jesus' final words to his followers are what we know today as the "Great Commission".

With those words, the followers of Jesus knew exactly what to do, and they went straight to work.

Just kidding. No, they didn't. They kinda just stood there looking up. Take a minute to put yourself in their shoes -

What would you do? God shows up and does something amazing; now it's your turn. What is your first reaction? Are you excited? Scared? A little bit of both? Describe how you think you might feel.

Empowered by the Spirit for Kingdom Living

I think one question Jesus' followers asked was, "What are we supposed to do?" Which is fair. It might be a question you're asking. Maybe you're wrestling with something God's doing in you, and you can't quite figure out what to do next. You're in good company.

Jesus' followers went back to the place where they had been staying, and they waited for days. Imagine how that felt.

Waiting on God can be tricky. It's hard to tell if you're waiting in faith or hiding in fear. I'm sure many followers have prayed for God to give them a sign. Well, they got one. Listen to this:

Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:2-4)

The Holy Spirit came and filled the people in that room, and crowds from all over came running. And what happened next is really cool. The followers of Jesus emerged and began speaking to people from every nation in their heart language.

In Acts 2, we read that about 3000 people joined God's kingdom that day!

So what does it look like to live in God's kingdom on Earth? Well, it means following the way of Jesus, our King.

Think about that for a moment.

Read Galatians 5:16-26. What does it mean to walk by the Spirit? Can you relate to the tension between your flesh and the Spirit that this passage describes? How do you see the Holy Spirit working in your life to produce the fruits listed in verses 22-23? Write down your thoughts.

Being the Church

Living in this freedom to follow Jesus, we are able to be what Jesus called "His Church." The Church is the embodiment of God's kingdom on Earth. Imperfect, but becoming more like Jesus every day. The Church isn't a building or institution - it's millions of followers of Jesus who, through the power of the Holy Spirit, do two things:

They love God, and they love others.

That's simple to say, difficult to do, trust me. But we're not alone. The Holy Spirit is working through us to build God's kingdom on Earth and make us more like Jesus every day. I trust in God's big mission, and I hope you do too. See you next time.