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**Message Series: 40 Days | Seek. Ask. Fast.****Message Title: 40 Days of Mission****Scripture: Acts 1:1-11**

In the final week of the series, we examine the last instance of 40 days in Scripture: Jesus spent 40 days after the resurrection with his disciples. This last forty-day period is not an ending but a sending. Jesus ascends to heaven, not to close the story, but to launch the mission.

The Lord promises in Jeremiah 29:13, *“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”* Throughout this 40 Day series, together as a church, we have committed to three actions:

Seek: intentional attention. To seek is to choose to direct our attention toward God deliberately.

Ask: prayerful dependence. To ask is to pray with trust, naming our need before a good Father.

Fast: sacred subtraction. To fast is to remove something good so we can make room for something greater.

After the crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days appearing to the disciples and teaching them about the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:3). Jesus also promised the Holy Spirit. Jesus redirected their focus from the end of time to the mission of God.

In Acts 1:8, Jesus told them, *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

What is a witness, and what does a witness do?

1. A witness experiences or sees an event.
2. A witness verbally communicates what they saw or experienced.

The geographical locations expand the mission and the Kingdom of God from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria, and then to the ends of the earth.

Acts 2: The Day of Pentecost (10 days after the ascension)

- The Holy Spirit is a significant character in the book of Acts. On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit is poured out on the followers of Jesus who were praying. The disciples were empowered to proclaim the gospel of Jesus in other known languages to those gathered in Jerusalem.
- Peter, who has experienced the power of the resurrection, preaches that Jesus the Nazarene is the only source of salvation. Because of the resurrection of Jesus and by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, Peter was transformed from a denier to a declarer.
- Many respond by believing and being baptized. 3,000 people were added to the church that day.

Three common reasons that prevent us from living as witnesses and stepping into God's mission:

1. Fear of Inadequacy

- Many believers hesitate because they feel unqualified, thinking, "I'm not equipped." "I don't know enough Scripture." "What if they ask a question I can't answer?" "I'm not good at talking about my faith."
- Underneath this is a subtle assumption that witnessing requires expertise. A witness doesn't need answers, only experience to talk about.
- Fear convinces us that mission is dependent on our competence, but Scripture reminds us that mission depends on the Spirit's Power.

2. Misplaced Priorities

- Distraction arises from full schedules, career demands, and family responsibilities. Mission doesn't feel urgent because daily life feels immediate.
- The early disciples reordered their lives around Jesus' kingdom. However, we often try to fit his mission into our leftover space, as the mission is crowded out by busyness.

3. Misunderstood Identity

- Some people assume mission belongs to the pastor, missionaries, extroverts, and the super Christians, thinking, "That's for someone else."
- Mission is not a spiritual gift for a few. Instead, it's a calling for everyone. When we misunderstand who we are, forgetting we are sent people, we shrink back.
- We are Christ's ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20). We are a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9). We are empowered by the same Spirit who filled the early church.

In response to these reasons that prevent us from living on mission, remember these truths:

1. You Are Already Positioned for Impact

- You don't have to go anywhere to be on mission. Acts 1:8 begins in Jerusalem, where we already are. You have relational connections at your work, in your neighborhood, at your school, at your gym, and with your family.

2. The Spirit Supplies What You Lack

- You may feel nervous, inadequate, or unsure. This feeling doesn't disqualify you, but rather creates an opportunity for you to rely on the Holy Spirit. The mission is not dependent on you, but on the presence of the Holy Spirit in you.

3. God is Already at Work Ahead of You

- Mission is not initiating something from scratch, but joining something that is already in motion. God is already at work in hearts and places you can't. You're just called to be faithful.

Church, we are on mission with God to witness to what Jesus has done in our lives. We are already positioned where God has planted us. The Holy Spirit supplies what we lack, and God is already working. Let's continue to follow him on mission to share the good news and expand the Kingdom.