

Gospel Gazing-Acts 1:1-11 Written
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There are several components of this sermon that involve physical movements of the congregation. Most movements take place right in the pew. However, there is one larger movement at the end. Suggestions are included for those with mobility issues. The movement of the sermon is designed specifically to make worshipers literally move, because we are called to be a people of movement as we carry out the message of Acts 1:8. No doubt, being instructed to move in the pew will make some individuals uncomfortable. However, when we are carrying out the instructions of Acts 1:8 it involves trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit, and going outside our comfort zones. This message encourages worshipers to be witnesses empowered by the Holy Spirit who gaze, go, and grow.

***Special Note: Movement instructions will be given at the beginning of each section and will appear throughout outline in [brackets].

I. Introduction

- A. Triumph, Yearning, Gaze, Empower words that come to mind when look at Acts 1
- B. First 11 verses serve as a bridge between Luke and Acts
- C. Triumph
 - 1. Define: the joy or exultation of victory or success
 - 2. Through death and resurrection disciples convinced of God's triumph
 - 3. Disciples had sense of hope
- D. Yearning
 - 1. Define: a tender or urgent longing
 - 2. Disciples also had a sense of yearning
 - 3. Yearning for Christ to fulfill promise of restoration
 - a. Thought their mission would be chief executives of new kingdom
 - b. Actual mission proclaim the gospel
- E. Gaze
 - 1. Define: fix the eyes in a steady intent look often with eagerness or studious attention
 - 2. Disciples gaze up to Jesus after ascension (Acts 1:10 ESV)
 - 3. Looking to see what is next
- F. Empower
 - 1. Define: to give official authority or legal power to, enable
 - 2. By the Holy Spirit
 - a. Another fulfilled promise
 - 3. To carry the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome
 - 4. We too are empowered by Holy Spirit
- G. Us
 - 1. Lean into the tension
 - 2. We are witnesses of the gospel to the world
 - a. Witnesses of God's supreme grace in Christ
 - b. Jesus modeled for us what it looks like to give of self in love
 - 3. Take time to actively gaze, and then move from pew to people

II. Jerusalem

[Movement: Have worshipers bow their heads and close their eyes as they reflect about themselves during this section of the message].

- A. Disciples were instructed to wait in Jerusalem to receive power of Holy Spirit

- B. Jerusalem was their base
- C. Our base starts with us right where we are

D. Let's take a moment to gaze (repeat definition)

[Invite worshipers to enact the movement described in italics at the start of this section]

1. Think about yourself and the parts of you God created that are special and unique
 2. Where are you in your personal walk with God?
 3. What is holding you back personally from following through on God's instructions?
 4. What expectations do you have of Jesus?
 - a. Timing: like disciples we often want a timing for the fulfillment of Christ's plans
 - b. Conditions of life
- E. No need for all the answers let power of Holy Spirit work through us
- F. You have been directed by God to be the beacon of God's presence to those around you
1. Right now, right where you are
 2. Spiritually, physically, mentally, you are empowered to tell the gospel story

III. Judea

[Movement: Invite worshipers to look forward and look around them during this section of the sermon].

A. Jerusalem is a part of the region of Judea

[Invite worshipers to enact the movement described in italics at the start of this section].

- B. We must gaze (repeat definition) at the area around us.
1. What events are taking place?
 2. What pain are people experiencing?
 3. What questions do we have about our mission in this community?
- C. Holy Spirit
1. Provides us answers to our questions
 2. Guides us with the who
 3. Guides us in our timing
 4. Will work through us even if we do not have all the answers
- D. We have been chosen to be the beacon of God's presence
1. To our neighbors
 2. Highlight local church outreaches
 3. Highlight if there are any allocations to the Alma Hunt offering near you.

IV. Samaria

[Movement: For this section of the sermon, Invite worshipers to stand and turn with their backs to you as preacher of the sermon. This should intentionally have them facing a different direction of the worship space than what they are used to facing].

- A. Jews avoided people of Samaria
1. Thought they were lower status
 2. Impure

3. Different than them
- B. Disciples were called to spread the gospel to a region different than their own.

1. Ask you to do something a little different

[Invite worshipers to enact the movement described in italics at the start of this section].

C. God calls us

1. To gaze upon those that are different than ourselves
2. To be a witness in areas socially and economically different than our own
3. This can make us uncomfortable, angry, afraid
4. Yet we cannot shy away from these people.
5. Chosen to be the beacon of God's presence to those different than us

D. Holy Spirit works through us to carry out this counter cultural mission of being the witnesses of God

1. To tell the story of Christ
2. To tell the good news of God's free and complete acceptance available to all
3. To spread the love of God to
 - a. the abused and the abuser
 - b. the robbed and the robber
 - c. the marginalized and those that do the marginalizing
 - d. Add other opposite pairings connected with Alma Hunt offering allocations

V. The ends of the earth

[Movement: During this final section of the sermon, worshipers will be asked to move to the outer perimeter of the worship space facing the walls/windows. Note if you have people with mobility issues you can appoint an usher, prior to worship, to help them move or you can walk over and assist. Another option is to address during this section of your message ways we can carry out our mission when we cannot physically go].

A. In the book of Acts gospel reached beyond Samaria to the ends of the earth-in this case Rome

[Invite worshipers to enact the movement described in italics at the start of this section].

1. As you take your steps outward I invite you to gaze again
 - a. Think about the furthest place you have traveled
 - b. Was there anything you did not understand about the people or the culture?
 1. Ate differently than you
 2. Lived differently than you
 - c. Think about a time where God moved in your life in a bigger way than you ever imagined

B. Through power of Holy Spirit

1. Disciples witnessed to a world beyond their knowledge
2. Roman empire and beyond

C. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we are witnesses called

1. Beyond our knowledge
2. Beyond our skill set,
3. Beyond our expectations,
4. Beyond our communities and country
 - a. Emphasize any international Alma Hunt Allocations here
5. Beyond what we find even possible

D. God's perfect plan goes above and beyond what we can imagine

VI. Conclusion

[Movement: Invite the congregation to turn around and face one another as they stand side by side along the outer perimeter of the worship space].

A. Holy Spirit empowered regular people with human frailties and human limitations to take the gospel throughout the world

[Invite worshipers to enact the movement described in italics at the start of this section].

C. We too have been chosen to be the beacon of God's presence to the end of the earth through the power of the Holy Spirit

D. Influence is vast

E. While we wait for Christ's complete restoration

1. We are called to use our unique selves, gifts, and power of Holy Spirit to be Christ's witnesses

F. Our call is to move from the place of gazing at Christ and to go out into the world and be the hands and feet of Christ.