



# BIBLE READING NOTES

## AIR

### PREPARE

If I were one of the disciples, I would have wanted to hold onto Jesus in his physical form. Why was it better for the disciples (and for us today) that Jesus didn't stay with them? As we worship a God who is spirit, how can we as a church be the 'Body of Christ'?

### BIBLE PASSAGE

**1** In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach <sup>2</sup>until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup>On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with<sup>[a]</sup> water, but in a few days you will be baptized with<sup>[b]</sup> the Holy Spirit."

<sup>6</sup>Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

<sup>7</sup>He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

<sup>9</sup>After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

<sup>10</sup>They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. <sup>11</sup>"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." **(Acts 1: 1-11)**





# BIBLE READING NOTES

## EXPLORE

1. Watching Jesus leave them again must have felt significant as the disciples were once again alone without his physical presence. However, it was also radically different from the time before (when Jesus was arrested and taken to his death). Look at the passage to see what Jesus taught his disciples during the time of special ministry before he left.
2. Ascension Day marks a time of fundamental change as the early church was born. Change is not always seen as a good thing. What reassurance about our attempts to cope with change do we get from verse 7-8 as we see Jesus' response to the disciples' attempts to apply their human understanding?
3. In **Luke 24 vv 52-53**, Luke tells us how the disciples responded once Jesus had gone. They had clearly got the message he'd been telling them! How do you spend time waiting for God's answer to promises or prayers? What can we learn from their response?
4. In this morning's sermon, Peter talked about the three ways he knows Jesus is with him – guidance after prayer; the love, peace and joy he brings; and a sense of not being alone. As we seek to be 'witnesses' (verse 8) towards what Jesus means for us, what examples can you think of in your life that would give evidence to what you have seen and heard?

## RESPOND

The Easter story has many periods of waiting, and today's passage introduces another one. What have you learnt from times of waiting? As we wait for lockdown to be lifted, ask yourself: what is God teaching me in this time of waiting?

## PRAYER

Jesus, when we think of Ascension Day, we want to say wow – not only because of the amazing excitement of you being lifted back to your Father in Heaven, but also because of the anticipation of the disciples, and the promise of the Holy Spirit to come. Help us to feel the same sense of enthusiasm and preparedness as we wait for your return. Amen.

