

## Small Groups @ TBC Sermon Discussion Notes

**Date of Sermon:** January 15<sup>th</sup> 2017

**Title:** Awaiting the Spirit of the Ascension

**Speaker:** Paul Ferguson

**Introduction:** This was the second talk in a series on the book of Acts. The talk looks at Acts 1:9-14, the ascension of Jesus and the gathering of the disciples et al in Jerusalem in anticipation of the Spirit.

**Review:** Invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review.

**Read:** Acts 1:9-14

### Reflect:

- Why do you think the ascension has receive less attention than the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection?
- It seems that we can easily get drawn into ‘spacial’ questions about the location of Jesus ascension (Olivet) (v12) or speculations about heaven. This can cause us to miss the reason Luke recorded these events. Read the text carefully and then consider it in the context of Daniel 7: 13-14 & Phil: 5 - 11. What is the bigger picture?
- If the ascension is about Jesus ascending to His throne (a coronation) what were the implication for the disciples and therefore us? Read Matthew 28: 18 & John 14: 15-20.
- Regarding heaven and earth the renowned New Testament scholar NT Wright said this:

*...heaven and earth, in Biblical cosmology, are not two different locations within the same continuum of space or matter. They are two different dimensions of God’s good creation.” Tom Wright, Surprised by Hope*

- Consider this quote. How might we live with a greater appreciation of heaven and earth coming together? The Lord’s prayer asks us to pray “your kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” (Matt 6: 10) How might our priorities in prayer be challenge by the thought of heaven and earth coming together?
- In our reading the disciples where challenged by the two men dressed in white (angels) as to why they were looking to the sky (v11). Previously they had been overly concerned with what was going to happen on earth (v6). Consider how we can walk the line between heavenly consciousness and earthly service?

**Leaders:** feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes. **Don’t feel you have to use all of the material**, but do try to keep the shape of Review – Read – Reflect – Respond and **DO make room for the ‘And Finally’ questions!**

- The disciples were changed. Following the ascension, they returned to Jerusalem and gathered together in prayer. They had been scattered, fearful and full of doubt. (Luke 24: 13-35; John 20, 21) Talk about how having Jesus the king in the 'control room' heaven can change us and our perspectives? How might this thought shape our lives on our Frontlines?

**And finally:**

As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?