

06.02.21 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

Title: “Being Shaped and Formed by Our Journey”

Scripture Reading: [The Book of Acts](#)

Reflection: Pastor Henry

Have you ever taken a journey, or gone on a trip, or visited a certain place, or met a person(s) that had a major impact on your life? Where did you go? What did you see and experience that was so impactful? Who did you meet? How was your life changed because of who/what you experienced?

When I think about some of the different trips that I have taken with family or with school, places I have been able to visit, and people that I encountered along the way, certain journeys impacted me more than others. For example, I think about the [Mauthausen concentration camp](#) I visited in Austria with a group from my German class in high school, the [Holocaust Museum in Washington DC](#) that I visited with my interim class in college, and the opportunity our family had to visit the grave of my great uncle Henry in the [American Cemetery at Normandy Beach](#) a few years ago. Three separate, but related journeys, that taught me so much about the depths of our depravity and ways that humans have responded to that. Three separate, but related journeys that shaped and formed part of who I am today.

What journeys have you taken that shaped and formed who you are today?

For the past 8 months, all of us have been on a journey together, a journey through the books of Acts. On this journey, we were introduced to and encountered all kinds of different...

- PEOPLE: Peter, Matthias, the lame beggar, John, Annas the high priest, Barnabas, Ananias and Sapphira, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Sanhedrin, Paul, Gamaliel, Stephen, Philip, Simon the Sorcerer, Ananias, Aeneas, Tabitha, Cornelius the centurion, Agabus, Herod, Rhoda, Lucius of Cyrene, Lydia, the female slave, the Roman jailer, Dionysius...a member of the Areopagus, a woman named Damaris, and Agabus to name just a few.
- PLACES: Jerusalem, Solomon’s Colonnade, the public jail, Samaria, Lydda, Sharon, Joppa, Caesarea, the house of Cornelius, Antioch, Cyprus, Athens, Philippi, and the Areopagus to name just a few.
- WAYS THE SPIRIT OF GOD WAS AT WORK in and through and around the disciples of the early church: the Spirit rested upon them...the Spirit enabled them to speak in different languages...they were cut to the heart...the Spirit added to their number daily...the Spirit enabled them to perform many signs and wonders...the Spirit took Philip away...the Spirit encouraged them...God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean...The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them...The voice spoke from heaven a second time, ‘Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.’...the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning...through the Spirit he predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world...the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

This week, however, our journey through the book of Acts comes to an end.

As our journey comes to an end, I encourage you to reflect on the journey we have been on together for the past 8 months. Reflect on the people and places we encountered, and the ways the Spirit of God was at work

along the way. As you take time to reflect on our journey through Acts, what stood out to you? What caught your attention? What did your eyes see, your ears hear, and your heart feel? What did you notice early on in our journey? What do you notice recently? Write down some of these things.

After you spend some time reflecting on what you noticed, reflect on the following questions: How has this journey shaped and formed you as a disciple of Jesus today? How are you different today because of our 8-month journey through Acts? What impact has this journey had and what impact is it having on you and you continue your journey of faith moving forward?

Then, I encourage you to give a “trip recap” to someone else about what discovered and experienced along the way about God and yourself. Embrace the [“Try It” from the formation guide for this week](#). Find someone else from church who has been on the journey with you and share the impact of your journey through Acts with them. Share with them how your journey thorough the book of Acts has impacted you just like you might share about a journey to say Walt Disney World, a national park, or a summer vacation destination. Share about what you saw, what you experienced, and how you are different because of your trip through Acts. Then, have them do the same for you. Have them share with you how they are being shaped and formed by their journey through the book of Acts.

Pastor Doug reminded us this past Sunday that “The story of God’s hope for a lost world is still being authored. The reality is, we’re writing it today - you and me and the believers around the world. The reality is God is still at work reclaiming the lost and building his kingdom. He’s not finished; he’s not just treading water or sitting back and observing, he is fully invested. And he is fully committed to using ordinary people like you and me to turn this world right-side up.”

How has our journey through the book of Acts shaped and formed you for the journey that’s still being written?

Prayer:

God, what an incredible journey we have been on together during these past 8 months. Your Spirit is at work in so many ways, in all kinds of different people, and in all kinds of places. Holy Spirit, continue to work in our hearts and lives today. Shape and form us O God. AMEN.

Action Item for the Day/Week:

Share with someone from Covenant Church who is not part of your family how you are being shaped and formed by our journey through Acts. Then, ask them how our journey through the book of Acts is shaping and forming them.

Songs for today:

[Holy Spirit](#)

[Spirit of the Living God Fall Afresh On Me](#)

[Build Your Kingdom Here](#)

[Lord You Give the Great Commission](#)