**Colors of Grace – wk 3 – Sky (Blue)**

**Jesus walked the earth 2000 yrs ago - crucified, buried & rose again The big question is now what? Is that the end of the story? It is not.**

**After he arose he actually appeared 11 times over 40 days - Acts 1:3 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.**

**What appears to be contradictory accounts, are actually complementary accounts. Together the 4 give us a full view.**

**From Resurrection to Ascension – 40 Days – The Jesus Sightings**

**This was not mass hallucinations or hypnosis**

**Resurrection day – Jerusalem**

**o Mary Magdalene - alone (Mt 28, Mk 16, Lk 24, Jo 20)**

**o 4 women (Ma 28:9, Mk 16:1, Lk 24:10) Mary #2, Salome, Joanna, plus 1**

**o Peter alone – mentioned but not elaborated on (1 Co 15:3, Lk 24:34)**

**o 2 on road to Emmaus - Cleopas & Mary (Lk 24:13-35, Mk 16:12-13)**

**o Disciples and group – without Thomas (John 20:19-24)**

**1 Week after the resurrection – Jerusalem**

**o Disciples and group – with Thomas (Jo 20:26-28)**

**2 weeks after the resurrection – Galilee**

**o Disciples (only 7) at sea of Galilee – fishing & breakfast (Jo 21:1-2)**

**3 to 4 weeks plus after resurrection – Galilee**

**o Disciples all of them - on a mountain in Galilee - (Matt 28:16,17)**

**o Disciples and crowd – 500 + (1 Cor 15:6) - News was spreading**

**o James – Jesus half-brother - not elaborated on (1 Cor 15:6)**

**40 Days after the Resurrection – Jerusalem (Mount of Olives)**

**o Great commission – (Ma 28:18-20, Mk 16:15-16, Lk 24:44-49, Acts 1:8)**

**o The Ascension – (Acts 1:1-11) (color blue – gazing up at the departure)**

**Paul sums up much of this with - 1 Corinthians 15:2 It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you—unless, of course, you believed something that was never true in the first place. 3 I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. (refers to Gospels as scripture) 4 He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. 5 He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. 6 After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. (go ask them about it yourself) 7 Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him. (4 years after resurrection)**

**Jesus is alive and He appeared physically to others. No doubt! These eyewitness accounts launched the early church thru H.S.**

**We have not seen him – but we know it’s true! 1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.**

**After Thomas finally saw Jesus and believed – Jesus said this John 20: 29 Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”**

**Jesus is victorious – and no single book can contain all he has done! - John 20:30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (We can be confident in what the apostles gave)**

**It is important to realize that the gospels are not always - Biographic but they are apologetic (ready answer)**

**Sometimes covering weeks / months/ years in a few verses**

**The ancients focus on character analysis over chronology.**

**John 21:24 This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. (eyewitness) We know that his testimony is true. 25 Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written. (There are more miracles, events, and teachings! As the NT was written we get them)**

**The Jesus Sightings – 40 Days – A significant time of change**

**For 40-days: He hung out at homes, traveled w. friends, ate meals, taught them about the kingdom… Pay attention to the 40’s. It means God is doing something significant**

**40 is used 146 times in scripture – represents change – few examples**

* **The Bible - was written by 40 different people**
* **Noah – 40 days / night of rain – at the great flood (Gen 7:4)**
* **Abraham – 40 righteous people request (Gen 18:29)**
* **Moses – 40 days w/ God on Mt Sinai – word of God (Ex 24:18)**
* **Moses – 40 days the 12 spies explored Canaan (Num 13:25)**
* **Moses – 40 years a generation wandered in desert (Num 14:32)**
* **Moses – 40 yrs a prince / 40 yrs a shepherd / 40 yrs a deliverer**
* **Israel was captive by Philistines - 40 yrs (Jud 13:2)**
* **Goliath taunted - 40 days (1 Sam 17:16)**
* **Ezekiel – 40 days laid on right side – represents sin (Ez 4:6)**
* **Jonah – 40 days to repent or God’s judgment on Nineveh (Jon 4:4)**
* **Moses / Elijah / Jesus – 40 days of fasting**
* **Saul / David / Solomon – 40 years each ruled a united Kingdom**
* **Jesus – 40 days was tempted and fasted (Lu 4:2) – and**
* **Jesus – 40 days after the resurrection before ascension (Acts 1:3)**

**AND BTW – How many weeks is a full term pregnancy? 40**

**Today last sighting & lift off: Jerusalem (Mount of Olives)**

**One last time with the disciples - A Commission and an Ascension**

**Acts 1 is where it happens - The most important and final instructions before leaving earth - Acts 1:1 In my former book, (Gospel of Luke) Theophilus, (new roman Christian) I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 (story of Jesus is just the beginning) until the day he was taken up to heaven, (ascension) after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, (death on the cross) 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.**

**1. Jesus was clear on His mission**

**Jesus was not confused or misled his death was not a mistake. It was on point and intentional. Jesus had come to die for us / you!**

**He often said he would be crucified and rise again – for the forgiveness of sin – our penalty upon himself.**

**The cross is not a sad story – it is a story of triumph and victory!**

**His work of salvation is finished – His work through us begins**

**Acts 1:4 On one occasion, (after resurrection) while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait (We are not good at waiting are we? They are to hang in a city that was hostile to them) for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized withwater, but in a few days you will be baptized (dunked) withthe Holy Spirit.”**

* **You may have knowledge, but now you need power**

**Christianity is more than information - it's about immersion**

**Like water immersion, we are to be immersed in the Holy Spirit**

**6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” (still not clear - a political kingdom was not his mission) 7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. (don't you worry about it - just do what you are called to do. Can you do that?)**

1. **Don't focus on the end time, focus on the now time (current)**

**Don't worry about the transition, focus on your mission**

**Obsessed with end times, books, movies, date setting, prophecy - we crave and feed on the fear & anxiety of the end times. Jesus says - don't worry about it - just do what I tell you to do.**

**(What does he tell us to do?) Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses (to tell what you know, have seen, have heard, and experienced with Jesus) in Jerusalem, (locally) and in all Judea (geographically) and Samaria, (demographically) and to the ends of the earth.” (Globally).**

**2. Jesus gives us a clear mission – it’s the what now!**

**You will be my witnesses in Garland / Sachse / Wylie / Plano / Rowlett / greater Dallas metroplex / Texas / US and – to the ends of the earth.**

**The mission - tell the good news of Jesus to everyone!**

**Jesus echoed our clear mission – over and over**

**(His ascension in Matthew) Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**

**Mark 16:15 He said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”**

**Luke 24:47 – “…so that the forgiveness of sins will be preached to every nation”**

**John 20:21 Jesus said, “…As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”**

**Matt 4:19 - Jesus invitation to follow, "come and I'll make you fishers of men."**

 **God’s kingdom must be our highest priority – above all other things**

* + **We are rescued, saved, and born again for a purpose**

**We are not simply saved for heavens sake and hells avoidance**

**We are petitioned, commissioned and unleashed with purpose to tell the world what Jesus has accomplished and done!**

* + **Order of mission - "Jerusalem - Judea - Samaria - world”**

**Start at home and work your way out - that means you can start today – right now – those who you rub shoulders w/ daily.**

**He told them "…you will be my witnesses…" Gk. Mar-toos /martyrs - genuine testimony proven thru death. We give our lives! Are you a witness? Our mission is clear, but it will be difficult - it will cost our life.**

**How are we able to do this? Acts 1:8 tells us 8 …you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses…”**

**3. Jesus gives us power for this mission - Power for what?**

**We need power for two reasons:**

1. **Power to live a life that honors God before others**
2. **Power and boldness to tell the good news of Jesus to others**
	* **The Holy Spirit - is the power of God in us to do it**

**The Holy Spirit is God – referred to as a person, not an it**

**Jesus refers to the H.S. as - our gift / our Comforter / our Helper / our Advocate / Teacher / Guide / the power of God at work in us.**

**We are drawn to, understand, grasp & turn to Jesus by the H.S. We are redeemed, adopted, & made holy and follow Jesus by the H.S!**

**To effectively tell the world and love others – Jesus sends us the H.S. – who convicts / draws / leads / and empowers us – to tell the world!**

**You might think - I can't do that – I’m a mess up… Guess what? You’re right. That is why we need and are given the H.S.**

* + **God uses unexpected people to accomplish his mission**

**Don’t forget who the rag tag team called the disciples: farmers, fishermen, businessmen, society rejects, tax collectors, zealous fighters, and sinners caught in the act - to follow him.**

**God can use you! Thru the blood of Jesus & power of the H.S.**

**Acts 1:9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. (He did not die again, he ascended to the throne of God - it was not imagined – they saw it. Jesus is the glorified king!)**

**This ensured that they had seen was the work of God not man**

**10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, (3yrs of walking w/ him - blind eyes open, healings, raised the dead, conquered death itself - He's finally back! Now it's goodbye? But Jesus I want you to stay… the baton is yours run with it!) when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. (Angels) 11 “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.” (What are you lookin at? get started – he will be back) \* The blue sky!**

**4. Jesus next mission of Jesus - His return.**

**He's coming back. But this time not as a servant – but a warrior king! He is not lax or forgotten. We should have an expectation of His return. The resurrection is proof of his return. Blue sky reminder of his return!**

* + **Until then - be his hands, feet and voice.**

**In Matthew 2 Jesus gives a parable: A boss leaves his wealth in the hands of 3 servants – 2 did great things with it - 1 hid it. The Master responds to each. What will Jesus find when he returns – what have we done with what he has given?**

**Will he find - His people too scared to tell to a friend, too selfish to help a neighbor, too proud to reach out to a stranger. Paralyzed by what people think - married to materialism & self-obsessed with self-pursuits? Jesus will be back, what will he find and say to you?**

**Matthew 25:21 – when the master returned to the faithful servants... 21 His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’**

**That is the cry of my heart – to hear those words!**

**Until that day – we pray, we obey, we tell, we love, we connect, we trust - we wait…**

**The Ascension in - Luke 24:44 He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” 45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. (Love that – Jesus can open your mind to the scripture) 46 He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, (His clear Mission) 47 and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are to be witnesses of these things. (Our clear Mission) 49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” (Our power for the mission)**

**The blue sky! - 24:50 When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. 51 While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. 52 Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. (there they waited for the H.S.)**

**The color of grace - blue sky! That blue sky is a reminder of the mission - AS we look to the returning King – living in mission**

**We got the what now? We got the how? Now it’s time for the – The DO!**

**We are to be a people - unleashed on a city – the world! Proclaiming and living the life and love of Jesus everywhere we go!**

**Prayer:**

**Jesus – I will do this! I give my life to you and to this mission.**

**I will hear… well done good and faithful servant.**