The Rescue (Ascension) - **wk 3 – What Now?**

**2000 yrs ago God walked through the doors of human History!**

**In case you missed it… here is the recap in one passage.**

**Luke:18:31 And taking the twelve, he said to them, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, (Palm Sunday) and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. (The Passover) 32 For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. 33 And after flogging him, they will kill him, (The Passion – good Friday) and on the third day he will rise.” (Easter – Resurrection Sunday) 34 But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.**

**Finish line Ribbon - the credits roll after the resurrection.**

**But that is not the end of the story. It was only the beginning.**

**After Jesus arose, He appeared 11 times in 40 days.**

**Notice the 40s. Means God is doing something significant**

**Mentioned 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 – How many weeks is a healthy pregnancy? 40**

**40 days Jesus appeared to disciples and prepared what was to come.**

**Jerusalem - 6 in the first 2 weeks**

**Galilee – 4 times the next 2 weeks**

**Jerusalem (Mount of Olives) one last time, Commission – Ascension**

**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)**

**Amazing to think there were more miracles, events, and teachings not recorded that the apostles heard and saw.**

**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.**

**The gospels are not always biographic, but they are apologetic**

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

**The ancients focused on character analysis.**

**His last sighting and lift off – is referred to as, The Ascension**

**Jesus unpacks the most important instructions ever.**

**Acts 1:3 After his suffering, (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.**

**During this 40-days: He hung out at homes, traveled with them, fixed meals and ate with them, and - taught & instructed about the kingdom… over 515 saw him alive. No doubt, Jesus is alive!**

**1. Jesus had a clear mission**

**I have come to reconcile people to God.**

**This was why he came, died, and rose. Salvation.**

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

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

**Christianity is more than information - it's spiritual transformation through Holy Spirit immersion.**

**Like water immersion, we are to be immersed in the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit – leads and directs pout life in Christ.**

**6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” (still a little clueless - 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)**

* **Don't focus on the end time, focus on the now time**

**Many are obsessed with end time - books - movies - date setting - prophecy - we crave 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 them to do?) Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses (Tell what you know, seen, and have heard) 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**

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

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

**Jesus is echoed this 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 – “…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 for a follower of Jesus - is our highest priority - above all other things**

**We are saved, rescued, and born again for this purpose**

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

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

* **Clear order of mission - start at home and work your way out**

**"Jerusalem - Judea - Samaria - world” - that means you can start today – right now – those who you rub shoulders with daily.**

**He told them "…you will be my witnesses…" Are you a witness? Gk. Mar-toos /martyrs - genuine testimony proven thru death**

**Our mission is clear, but it will be difficult - it will cost our life.**

**You might think - I can't do that – I’m a mess up…**

**Guess what? You’re right. That is why we are given the H.S.**

**8 …you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses…” (10 days later the Holy Spirit fell upon them in power)**

**3. Jesus gives us power for this mission**

**Power for what? We need power for two reasons:**

**\*\* Power to live a life that honors God before others**

**\*\* Power and boldness to tell the good news of Jesus to others**

* **The Holy Spirit - is the power of God in us to do the mission**

**The HS is God. Jesus refers to the H.S. as our gift / Comforter / Helper / Advocate / Teacher / Guide / the power of God in us.**

**We cannot know Jesus, be redeemed by, or follow Jesus w/out the H.S – it is impossible! AND To effectively tell and love others – requires the H.S. He convicts, draws, leads, and empowers!**

**\*\*\* But not me… you don’t know me… my past – my family.**

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

**Jesus called a rag tag team of farmers, fishermen, society rejects, immoral tax collectors, zealous fighters, and sinners - to follow. A forgiven and filled motley crew changed the world!**

**Acts 1:9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. (He was still there – they just could not see him)**

**He did not die again - it was not imagined – they saw it.**

**This ensured this 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…) 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.”**

**4. Get started – He will be back**

**Jesus physically ascended to the Father and will physically return.**

**Jesus next mission – Redemption of the universe. He's coming back. But this time not as a servant – but a warrior king!**

**John 14:2 In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. (He is today – preparing a place for those who are his)**

**He is not lax or forgotten. We should have an expectation.**

**The resurrection is proof of his coming return.**

**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, to selfish to help a neighbor, or too proud to reach out to a stranger, paralyzed by what people think - married to materialism & self obsessed. 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.’**

**Where is Jesus now? He left us?**

**Let’s find out from Jesus… John 16:28 - I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father." (See he left!)**

**Matt 28:20b And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**

**We are not orphans of a runaway dad, he is here, alive, & active!**

**Jesus said many times that He was eternal God come from Heaven Jesus is not dead – he is still alive! He is still with us!**

**Some men find it hard to worship or follow Jesus. Why follow a man you can beat up? Most men are not impressed or inspired**

**Maybe you need to see Jesus the way He is today:**

**To know the real Jesus is to be in awe and follow**

**Revelation alone describes Jesus as (Rev 1:8, 17-18, 19:11-16, 21:6, 22:13)**

**The eternal Lord God in the flesh, the Alpha and the Omega, the who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty, the living God who holds the power of life and death in his hands, the ruler over all, the very word of God, the captain of the Lord of hosts, the One who is Faithful and True, the mighty righteous judge, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!**

**That is Jesus! The Lord almighty! Jesus is not just the God of Christians – He is the God of all creation! When we bow the knee to him – we acknowledge His Lordship.**

**RIGHT NOW - Jesus is seated on the throne of God!**

**Imagery of the LORDS throne: 196X total – 61X in NT – 45X in Rev.**

**Revelation declares Jesus is exalted and is on the throne!**

**Hebrews 1:3 And He (Jesus) is the radiance of His (God’s) glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power when He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high…**

**This is from the most quoted verse in the NT**

**Psalm 110:1 - “The Lord says to my lord: “Sit at my right hand…”**

**Why does it say he is seated at the right hand of God?**

**A throne is a special seat reserved for royal monarchs. When the Bible speaks of God’s “throne,” the emphasis is on God’s transcendent power and sovereign rule. The throne need not be a literal throne.**

**God the Father is an incorporeal, immaterial, invisible spirit. Not having a physical body, God does not literally “sit.”**

**Much like god’s hand, eyes, or mouth.**

**They are anthropomorphic figures of speech - that describe God in human terms so we can understand his actions and ways.**

**This invisible God the father became visible – Jesus Christ the son.**

**Jesus risen in the flesh – remains int eh flesh – so that we can see and know God. Rev 5&7 - he who sits upon the throne is the Lamb of God.**

**Jesus “seated at the right” is the proclamation of not a sidekick, but of one who sits in majesty, honor, power, justice, & holiness. No wonder Psalm 110 is used so much. King Jesus is sovereign over all!**

**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) 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)**

**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. 53 And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God. (there they waiting in Jerusalem for the H.S.)**

**Finish line ribbon**

**We run that race – we will run and stumble – and fail – but get back up – and run – and run – for Jesus is calling us. I only get one chance to run this race - I will grab as many to come with me – and run – and run – because one day… the end will come – eternity is waiting. I will cross that finish line. Tired and well spent…**

**Jesus my king will be there – and wrap his arms around me – and I want to hear him say… “well done though good and faithful servant… enter now into the joy of the Lord.” And I pray – that I can look up and see those who are there because I lived the mission. This is the race worth running!**

**That is the race of faith, but some race only for themselves**

**The tape is stretched**

**We got the “what now?” We got the “how?” Now it’s time to - Do it!**

**Proclaiming and living the life and love of Jesus everywhere we go! Being the hands and feet of Jesus in our community & world!**

**Do you attempt to rule your own life? Do you attempt to rule from your own throne? He who sits on the throne of all creation is calling you to surrender and bow to the king!**