

God's Love Waits

Scripture: Acts 2: 12-26

Date: May 24, 2020

PUZZLE

SERIES OVERVIEW

Maranatha YYC has been on a long journey this year in seeking God's presence and seeking our purpose in response to these questions and answers. We've travelled through the season of Epiphany, through Lent and now we're finishing six weeks of post Easter. But we find ourselves in the midst of a gap in the church calendar. Jesus was resurrected and ascended, but the promised power of the Holy Spirit has not yet come.

JOURNEY

Journeys often require maps – whether its paper, Tom Tom or Google - but they are only as good as knowing where you are now and where you are intending to go. But if your map is outdated or if your map is for the wrong area or if your map has changed since it was created – it might not be able to guide you through life

MISSING PIECES

The disciples in the text don't have a map either. There was no manual on how to build a New Testament church. There was no map on how to be a New Testament church. They were following Jesus' promise that they power of the Holy Spirit would come upon them if they went to Jerusalem --- and waited. Sure, Jesus' teachings were still ringing in their ears but He was gone and they were still here wondering.

COVID

In our world we too are lacking a map moving forward. Covid 19 has penetrated almost every fabric of our life challenging how we think and changing how we act. Two months into this new normal there seems to be a light of a 'return'. But questions remain of how and when. Almost everyone uses the term – unprecedented. In other words – there's no playbook – there's no simulation on how to deal with this specific virus in this specific context. There's no manual on what to do and there's no map on how to live.

PRAY

WAY STATION

Travelling long distances often requires looking for places to stop and refresh ourselves. Go to the bathroom, stretch our legs and give a break to the journey. Those rest stops – in the older terms were called Way Stations - a station along the way to rest and refresh yourself with food, shelter rest etc.

PRAYER / PRAISE

The disciples went to Jerusalem and it became their way station - a type of waiting station. Luke 24: 52-54 speaks of how they returned to Jerusalem - worshipping Jesus as they were filled with joy. Acts 1: 14 speaks of how on their return they were constantly in prayer.

It's a similar scene to that following the crucifixion where they were together in a room afraid of being found out. Now they are together in the temple worshipping, praising and praying.

PAUSE

In our world there is a sentiment to do something is better than nothing. But there is a danger of moving ahead of God's promises, ahead of God's power, ahead of God's promises. The disciples chose not to rush ahead with their own plans but rather wait in wisdom and faith. Psalm 46: 10 encourages us to - be still and know that I am God. To be is the central understanding of who one is. Still as a noun speaks of stopping, ceasing or a deep silence and calm. Still as an adverb speaks of enduring as in – this is still going on.

PREPARE**WAY STATION**

A way station is a refreshing stop / break from the journey but it is also an opportunity to replenishing supplies. Gas for the vehicle and food for the stomach help replenish our resources. It was an intentionality of what we needed and where we could get it

DISCIPLES

Peter stands in the group of about 120 people and speaks of a recognition that – in their praying and waiting - there is something missing in order to move forward. Peter dives into the Psalms to affirm that while Judas' role was necessary for Jesus' role on the cross (Psalm 69: 25) God also affirms the need for a replacement of Judas and he quotes Psalm 109: 8 to affirm this.

Peter outlines the criteria to replace Judas that includes being with them from the beginning (Jesus' baptism), through the years of ministry, through the crucifixion and resurrection and had witnessed the ascension. Someone who had seen the gospel story for themselves and could testify to its truth. They pray again – surrendering this decision to God and two names come forward - Joseph and Matthias. The prayers and the lots are cast and Matthias is chosen.

PRE-VISION

There are many gaps in our journey through life and faith as we travel in this broken, sinfilled world. In this increasingly changing world we find that those some of those directions, some of those instructions are no longer helpful or useful. All this results in stress, anxiety, frustration, fatigue.

WAY STATION

Yet God offers way stations in our journeys - places where we can be refreshed and replenished. With the absence of sports and entertainment and other alternatives we have the opportunity to dive into prayer and pray for those in our church family and church leadership. We also have the opportunity to dive into scripture and learn more of who this God is and to dive into culture to see more of where God is needed. To replenish our learning and to replenish our loving.

Thus, becoming rested, restored as we are stilled before the Lord and with the Lord so that our anticipation will grow of what God has promised. While we may not know exactly as the maps and manuals are still being written but God's promise will be revealed - at the right time and in the right way. At that time we will be ready - we will be righteous and we will be ready to respond. Then we may worship God and sing of God's glory – now and forevermore.

AMEN