

INTRODUCTION: In our post-Easter series, we will be reflecting on what it means to be Jesus' witnesses in the world (Acts 1:8). Each one of us occupies very particular places and, because of that, we each have our own unique opportunities to offer love and service to those we interact with. We have a "Jerusalem," a place where God has called us to be present and attentive to what He is doing and to join Him in that work. We are, in some sense, all missionaries; we are all witnesses of God's good news for the world in and through Jesus.

CENTERING: Take a moment to center yourself for communion with God.

READING: Acts 1:4-8

SCRIPTURE & SERMON REFLECTION:

- When you hear the phrase "you will be my witnesses," what comes to mind?
- How is being a witness different or the same as your understanding of evangelism?
- From your reading of the New Testament, how did the early Christians understand what it meant to be a witness of Jesus? What did they do? How did they live? Who did they love and serve? What was the cost?
- Compare your answers to the last question with your own life. What is different or the same? Where are the gaps? Why do you think these gaps exist?
- Theologian Willie James Jennings says, "Although there will only be a few who knew him (Jesus) according to the flesh, countless more will follow these disciples in rightly claiming to be an irrefutable presence of an experience with Jesus ..." How are you an irrefutable presence based on your experience with Jesus?

STEPS IN BEING A WITNESS:

- Being a witness means that we have seen or experienced something. Reflect on how Jesus has transformed your life. In other words, what ways is your life different because of following Jesus? That is your story. That is your primary witness!
- Your "Jerusalem" is where you live. This week, take a walk around your block (or the floor of your dorm or apartment building) and pray this prayer: Lord, would you please deepen my love for my neighborhood, this place I call home? "The Word became flesh and moved into the neighborhood." (John 1:14). Pray also that the Spirit would begin giving you eyes to see and ears to hear what's happening in your neighborhood.

PRAYER:

"God of hope and courage, You call each of us to bear witness to Your abundant love in a frightened world. All around us are signs the world is struggling and the future is unclear. Strengthen our confidence in Your unfailing grace and grant us the courage to move onward, even when we cannot see the way, knowing that You will guide our every step. Amen."