



SERIES: ACTS - WHEN THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN
MESSAGE TITLE: "MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE"

SPEAKER: BRAD WILLIAMS
DATE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2020

MESSAGE SUMMARY

BIBLICAL TEXT(S): *Acts 11:1-26*

In our modern, rational world, we are often convinced that what we see is what we get. It's hard for our minds to make sense of the supernatural or even believe there is something beyond the physical. However, Acts 13 gives us two reminders that we do live in a world that intersects with spiritual powers beyond the physical.

Believers in Acts 13 experience the supernatural voice of the Holy Spirit. This voice tells them to send Paul and Barnabas on a missionary journey. A few verses later, we see these two men encountering a false prophet, someone who is also experiencing supernatural power, but it's an evil power, not something from God. Both of these instances have important things to teach us about our place in the world today and the forces beyond our sight.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. These can help your group understand and apply the teaching more profitably

LEAN IN

These are icebreakers and warm ups, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. If you were to give out an award to the most diabolical villain in a movie or book, who would it go to?
2. Have you ever had a very real encounter of God's presence? What happened and what were you doing when it happened?
3. Do you tend to be a pessimist or an optimist when it comes to solving large, world issues? Why do you think that is?
4. Last time we met, we talked about [whatever you talked about]. Has anyone had a chance to put that lesson into practice? Has it had an impact on your life in any way?

LOOK DOWN

These are questions about the Bible passage(s) and observations about what's been read. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. How did the church at Antioch experience something beyond the physical realm? What spiritual practices did they make use of?
2. What message did the Holy Spirit give to those at Antioch?

cont.

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3. How does this passage describe Bar-Jesus?
4. How did Paul respond to Bar-Jesus?
5. What was the result of Paul's rebuke of Bar-Jesus?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. What kinds of spiritual practices, experiences, locations, events, etc. are used by the church today to connect with God?
2. Do you think the Holy Spirit still speaks in the same way today? Why or why not?
3. Who are some "false prophets" at work in our world today? What groups, individuals, philosophies, etc. try to keep people from the faith today?
4. How have you seen the church respond well to "false prophets" and false philosophies today? How have you seen the church respond poorly or fail to respond?
5. In his message, Pastor Brad talked about how we sometimes assume that there isn't anything beyond what we can physically experience. How have you seen people in the church live out this assumption? How have you seen people in the world try to make space for something beyond the physical?

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. How are you incorporating spiritual practices into your life to help you connect with God and give space to hear his voice? Which practices do you find most helpful? If you aren't currently doing this, what kinds of practices might you try to incorporate into your life?
2. How have you experienced the Holy Spirit speaking in your life? If this is a struggle for you, what is most difficult about discerning the Spirit's voice?
3. What "false prophets" and philosophies do you find most convincing in our current world? How have you worked to fight against these voices?
4. How might you respond to "false prophets" in your conversations with friends, family, co-workers, etc?
5. Have you looked to physical or human solutions to our world's problems? How has this message challenged or encouraged you?

cont.

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LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. Do you feel disconnected from God or have a hard time hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit? Ask your group to help you brainstorm how to work a new spiritual practice into your life in order to be more open to his voice.
2. Is there someone in your circle of influence who has fallen sway to a "false prophet" or philosophy? How can your group join with you in praying for that person?
3. What is one way that this passage/sermon has given you a more balanced view of our world? How can you incorporate what you've learned into your life and thinking this week?

Thanks to Ashleigh Rich and the Adult Discipleship Team for this week's notes and questions, as well as Charissa Burns (@charissaburnsstudio on Instagram) for her illustrated notes, which normally appear on the following page.

