

Week Four

Conversations with God

LUKE 19-24

READ

Consider a time in the past when you were on the brink of embarking on some daunting new venture. Maybe you and a friend had just invested your entire life savings in the dream of opening your own business. Or maybe you and your spouse were bringing a new baby into the world weeks ahead of schedule and nervous about the health risks of a preterm delivery. Or perhaps you were diagnosed with a progressing cancer and faced with a steep uphill battle for your very life.

How did you spend the final days before your new venture began? To whom did you look to help you prepare for the daunting road ahead? your boss? your mother? a fellow cancer survivor? What wise counsel or insightful perspective helped you to navigate your journey?

The early disciples were no strangers to preparing for just such a daunting mission. Near the end of Jesus' earthly life, the disciples grew increasingly aware of the fact that Jesus was not going to usher in the kingdom of God in the way they had anticipated—with Jesus as their (earthly) triumphant king and them as his loyal subjects. They began to understand, instead, that Jesus' life was soon to be cut short and that if his mission were to continue, they must carry it out on their own.

Fortunately for the disciples, their leader was well aware that the success of his earthly mission depended not only on his own redemptive work on the cross, but also on the continued work of his disciples in the world. This week, as you read the remaining six chapters of Luke, you are asked to pay attention not only to the beautiful and familiar story of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, but also to the intense training and preparation the disciples receive in these fateful days. Notice how Jesus instructs, encourages, and prepares them for the arduous journey ahead.

He warns them of persecution...

They will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. (Luke 21:12)

He identifies potential pitfalls...

Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life. (Luke 21:34)

He gives insight into God's plan and their unique role...

[Jesus] opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things." (Luke 24:45-48)

He assures them he will send the Holy Spirit.

LUKE 19–24

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. (Luke 24:49)

Throughout this *Morph* module, you have been asked to consider your own unique role in God's great story. Jesus' commission to advance the kingdom of God was meant not only for the early disciples, but also for you, his present-day disciple. As you engage this mission, listen to Jesus' timeless words of wisdom and preparation and consider how these might apply to your own journey as well.

MEMORIZE

This week's memory verses:

Acts 4:13 "When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."

2 Corinthians 12:9 "My power is made perfect in weakness."

MEDITATE

Meditating is simply talking and listening to God. Your conversation with God will be inspired and informed by reading and memorizing Scripture, but your conversation should also be personalized. Carefully consider the passages, but don't *just* consider the passage. Talk and listen. Pour out your thoughts, concerns, frustrations, and joys. Or just sit in silence before God. Some talk best with God in a quiet room. Others prefer to talk with God while running or walking. Most importantly, engage God in a way that is authentic and personal.

Use the space below to record memorable thoughts or highlights from your Conversations with God to share with your Small Group or Running Partners.

