

I. Intro

- A. Unknown time... confusing... FOG of Unknown
 - 1. Schools, work, family, friendships, SOCIETY
 - 2. FEAR... see it play out in different ways
 - 3. **Fear of the unknown affects everything we know.**
- B. Review – Trying to find a way through this unknown future...
 - 1. First step into the unknown is trust- Abram
 - 2. Trusting that we are known by God gives us confidence in the unknown- Hagar
 - 3. Choices- Fight it, Do nothing, trust God and lovingly act- Joseph
- C. But we look at our daily life and this seems almost like wishful thinking...
 - 1. How do I know what to do when I barely understand what's happening right now let alone what the future is going to look like?
 - 2. I'm just trying to survive and I have this family and my own needs to worry about!
 - 3. On top of that I'm told from every side I need to stand up for this, fight for that, the future of the country hangs in the balance!!!
 - 4. What do we do? How can we possibly know the RIGHT path?
- D. What we need is a clear purpose.
 - 1. What we'll see is... **A clear purpose provides a path through the hazy unknown.**

II. GOD

- A. Set scene... skip ahead a couple thousand years.
 - 1. Disciples
 - 2. Abraham's descendents living in Promised Land but conquered by Rome.
 - 3. Disciples follow who they think is Promised One to restore the nation by force (ultimately fulfill promise to Abraham), Jesus
 - 4. Crucified
 - 5. Reports of Resurrection
 - a. Powers of the time against them... Temple/Rome
 - 6. Unknown future- this wasn't happening like they thought it would. "What do we do?"
 - a. Tried to fight it. Peter cut off ear
 - b. Leaning toward doing nothing
 - c. Jesus had other plans for them...
- B. **V. 16-17** *Then the eleven disciples [Judas dead] left for Galilee, going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.[Through the women witnesses] When they saw him, they worshiped him [Worship= GOD]—but some of them doubted [so real]!*
 - 1. "Are you really here? I saw you die? Dead people don't come back to life."
 - 2. Have a hard time believing Jesus rose from the dead?
 - 3. You're in good company. These guys were looking at him and still found it hard to believe. It was a process... Jesus had to **eat in front of them** to prove he wasn't a ghost.
- C. **V. 18** *Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.*

1. These guys are facing a crazy unknown future...
2. Jesus- You can trust me... Just proved it—rising from the dead... the point is that he is God... has ALL power...
3. ALL is a lot
4. You can trust me... Remember... **The first step into the unknown is trust**
5. Fear of the unknown is fear of loss of control... control to get what we want, for life to be what we hoped it would be, control of what happens to our kids, country, etc.
6. But when we understand who Jesus really is and choose to trust him... that fear starts losing its grip/power.
7. *We start seeing a purpose bigger than simply trying to protect what we have, fight for what we want*
8. With that trust comes something else too... **Trust clarifies our purpose.**
9. Jesus shows his followers that he has a bigger purpose in mind than anything they imagined... even bigger than their own nation.

D. **V. 19-20** *Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age*

1. Jesus gives them a purpose... **GO**
2. Not start a religion...
3. Go and tell the world what has happened, it's significance, and what following me really means.
4. What are his commands? Love God and Love your neighbor. **Paul-** **The only thing that counts is faith** [Trust] **expressing itself through love. (Gal 5:6)**
5. **GO**= **G**od and **O**thers.
6. You are loved by God... proved it through Jesus
7. You can now love through his love.
8. Be a blessing people...
9. Continuation of Abraham... Trust me and I will Bless the world through you

E. Their purpose was now the whole point of God's interaction with humanity... to bring his people back to himself.

1. Bigger than them.
2. Bigger than any nation or empire...
3. Wasn't about just them, or even just THEIR people, rights, or power...

F. A purpose that is bigger than us removes the fear of what the unknown will take away from us.

G. Jesus- "If you trust me then you will be clear of your purpose from here on out... "

1. "And you might not know what's going to happen next but if you trust me and keep your purpose clear you'll know where to take your next step..."
2. If you trust that Jesus has all power and knows/loves you... you can live for a purpose bigger than yourself... b/c you don't have to worry about what will happen to you in the unknown.

H. **Rest of the story-** Went and changed the world.

1. World around them was constantly changing, so much unknown... ten of them killed, stoned, starved, hated, stayed focused on their purpose b/c they knew they could trust the God who knew them.

III. YOU

- A. **You are invited** to the very same life of purpose
1. A life bigger than yourself. A life that cuts through the fog of the fear of the unknown
 2. You are invited to walk boldly where others can only dream of tiptoeing.
 3. You are invited to bring love, joy, peace, into every life around you... no matter how hazy the future is...
- B. But the first step is **to trust**....
1. Trusting that Jesus is who he said he was...
 - a. God in a body... sent to show us the depth of God's love all the way to death
 - b. A death that paid for the consequences of all the hurt we caused.
 2. Trusting that Jesus will do what he says he will do... he said he wouldn't stay dead and he didn't, so why would he lie about:
 - a. Never leaving us... taking care of us... empowering us to love others through his love.
- C. If you can trust that then you are **invited to** accept the greatest **purpose** in the history of humanity...
1. You are invited to be a continuation of the promise God gave Abraham 4000 years ago...
 2. **Gal 3:29** *And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you*
 3. Both the righteousness through faith (trusting Jesus makes you right with God)... but also being a blessing to the world.
 4. You are invited to be a part of a community that is a "blessing people."
 5. Your purpose is no longer about you, but doing good for (blessing) others in order to share the love of Jesus with your actions and words.
- D. It's a purpose that lets you chart a clear course through the unknown... **A purpose bigger than you provides a path through your big unknowns.**
1. Examples- How do I respond to people I disagree with?... What is your purpose?
 - a. If your purpose is you and what you want... you'll probably cancel, block, fight, worry, fear
 - b. If it's the great purpose of sharing Jesus' love... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control. Gal 5:22
 2. What do I do in the face of all of this turmoil?
 - a. If your purpose is you... you hunker down, turn a blind eye to needs around you, OR you FIGHT for your own rights over those of others... fight whoever thinks differently than you.
 - b. If your purpose is to show people the truth of God's love for them... you are actively on the lookout to help others, to bring peace, love, understanding to situations that desperately need it. What you do stems from your purpose itself, like a shoot growing from a branch. Is the branch you or the great God of the universe, himself?

E. Prayer this week>>> Show me how I can be a "blessing person" today.

IV. WE

- A. Imagine... having a trust that frees you to focus on a purpose bigger than yourself?
- B. Being free to be for others b/c you know God is for you?
- C. Being a person that blesses others...
- D. Knowing that no matter what the future holds... you know your purpose will never change... you'll know how to choose the next best step.

- E. Looking back on a life that didn't fight the inevitable future, or was simply paralyzed wishing for some kind of different reality... but being able to purposely and lovingly act for the better of others and being a voice of truth and love and HOPE.
- F. You are invited...
- G. You are invited to Trust
- H. You are invited to know that you are known
- I. You are invited to Act
- J. You are invited to the greatest purpose in the history of the world... leading people to the one person who can give them true life and purpose.
- K. You are invited to adventure into the unknown... so "go"! Love God and Others by being FOR others! And telling them the truth of Jesus' love, death, and resurrection.
- L. **A clear purpose makes the unknown an adventure to live not a nightmare to fear.**

"If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it." Luke 9:23-24

Questions

1. Share an analogy of what the unknown is like for you right now.
2. Read Luke 9:23-24. What do you think Jesus is saying here? How could you apply this to what you are experiencing right now?
3. What would it look like for you to be a "blessing person" this week? How can your group pray for you in this?