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*"Christ caring for People
through People"*

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Acts 1(The Message) To the Ends of the World

‘When they were together for the last time they asked, "Master, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now? Is this the time?" 7-8He told them, "You don't get to know the time. Timing is the Father's business. What you'll get is the Holy Spirit. And when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, all over Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the world." 9-11These were his last words. As they watched, he was taken up and disappeared in a cloud. They stood there, staring into the empty sky. Suddenly two men appeared n white robes! They said, "You Galileans—why do you just stand here looking up at an empty sky? This very Jesus who was taken up from among you to heaven will come as certainly and mysteriously as he left."

Greetings and Blessings:

Is this the time? -- Are we there yet? As parents we all recognize these words. On every journey we are used to hearing little voices from the back seat repeatedly asking this question. Jesus too had heard this question many times. But from adults, his disciples.

Their expectations quickly became frustrations as they thought Jesus was here to establish a new earthly kingdom. Living under the oppression of the Romans, they hoped to be set free. God had promised a Messiah who would come to liberate them. And that is exactly what Jesus was. But the liberation was not in the form they expected.

How many times have you and I made the same mistake? We face an obstacle and turn to prayer. That's good-- But then we begin to plan out what we want God to do for us in answer to our prayer. Sometimes in great detail we inform God exactly what steps we want Him to take to solve our problem. Then when he doesn't do exactly what we want, we get disappointed and we get annoyed (or worse). God we want to go somewhere, and here's the route we've planned and we want you to get us there, and soon we ask "are we there yet? Why not God?"

I have a different question. Why in the world do we think we can tell God how to take care of his business? Right down to the minute, with every detail.

But Jesus gives the disciples (and us) a very direct answer that we have trouble accepting it seems. **"You don't get to know the time. Timing is the Father's business.** And furthermore **What you'll get is the Holy Spirit.** And what is the purpose of receiving the Holy Spirit? Not so that we can give God our directions for him more directly. And not so we can manipulate this Spirit to do our bidding. Rather, **when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses.** When the Holy Spirit comes into us we will receive our task to perform for God. It is our task then to be patient, to watch and to wait to see what God may be calling us to do for Him, and how and when. The Holy Spirit will show us the way. Our job is not to lead and direct but to follow, **even to the ends of the world.** Let us open ourselves to hear. Through dreams and visions, through scripture, through the church community, through circumstances. God will confirm his will for our lives in any or all of these ways, but most of all through His indwelling Holy Spirit. May God bless us each one.

Amen.

(Rev.) John McGurrin