

Message Discussion Guide THE CHURCH'S BLANK CHECK

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

January 9, 2011

Acts 1-2

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Review the Message . . .

A Gathering of People for a Purpose

- **Jesus died on the cross for the people of The Church at Brook Hills.**
- **God opened the eyes and hearts of these people so they could believe in Him.**
- **God saved the people of this church and gave each person His Spirit.**
- **The people of The Church at Brook Hills live among a world of sin, darkness, and great need.**
 - **Over three billion people live on less than \$2 a day, and a billion of those people live in absolute poverty – in slums – hundreds of millions of men, women, and children are starving and dying of preventable diseases.**
 - **Billions of people are engrossed in false religions – over 1.5 billion of them have never even had a chance to hear the gospel.**
- **God has charged the people of Brook Hills to take the gospel to these people and ends of the earth.**

Application

- If we started with a blank slate, what would our church look like, considering this information?
- Considering these Scriptural truths, how would we utilize our resources as a church body to accomplish our purpose?
- How might our programs differ?
- How might our building differ?
- How might the organization differ?
- How might our giving differ?
- How might our attitudes and focus differ?
- We often hear about giving God a blank check with our lives, why haven't we ever considered giving Him one for this local church?

10 Reasons to Give a Blank Check with Our Church

- **Because Jesus is worthy of absolute surrender.**

Discussion

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- Read Acts 1. Explain that the “first book” referred to the Book of Luke.
- Enlist three learners to read Luke 9:23-25, 9:57-62, and 14:25-33.
- What kind of picture did Luke create of Christ in these passages?
- According to these verses what did Jesus require of His followers?
- Why were His followers willing to give up everything to follow Him?

Application . . .

- What things in our lives are “off limits” to Christ? What things are we not willing to give up for Him?
 - What are some ideas, people, and dreams that we are holding onto that keep us from being fully obedient to ANY calling that He gives us?
 - What is truly keeping us from surrendering our entire lives to Him? What are we afraid of?
 - What would our small groups and church look like if we were completely surrendered to Christ?
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- **Because Jesus is working to advance His kingdom.**

Discussion

- Read Acts 1:1, 10. Who did Luke say had begun the work? How would the work continue if the one who began it left only 11 verses later?
- Enlist three learners to read Acts 2:32-36, 9:3-13, and 28:30-31. How did Jesus continue to work after He physically left earth?
- How were His followers involved in His work?

Application . . .

- What do we think Christ is doing in our world today?
 - How do we view His involvement in the world? Is He active? Is He “hands-off”?
 - If Jesus is still advancing His kingdom today, why is it such a low priority in our lives?
 - What would our small groups and church look like if we were working to advance Christ’s kingdom?
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- **Because Jesus has clothed every single one of us with His power.**

Discussion

- Read Acts 1:4-8 and 2:1-4.
- Why was it important that Jesus’ disciples waited in Jerusalem?
- What does this indicate about the role of the Holy Spirit in the mission of God through His people?

Application . . .

- Jesus never meant for us to live for Him in our own power. Why do we keep trying

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to?

- How do our lives reflect a dependence upon the Holy Spirit?
- How do we practically live in the power of the Holy Spirit every day?
- What would our small groups and church look like if we lived in the power of the Holy Spirit?

- **Because Jesus has given every single one of us the same purpose.**

Discussion

- Enlist a learner to read Acts 1:8 again.
- What does Jesus call His followers to be after He leaves?
- What did it mean for them to be “witnesses” of Jesus?

Application . . .

- What kinds of ideas do we often consider to be our life’s purpose? Do we have more than one?
- How can the different roles that we play in life every day often distract us from the primary purpose that God has given us?
- What would our small groups and church look like if they unified around God’s purpose for them?

- **Because the world is our goal.**

Discussion

- In Acts 1:8, where does Jesus command His followers to be His witnesses?
- What places were OK for them to not reach?

Application . . .

- What places do our actions reveal as acceptable to not reach with the gospel?
- Why must our efforts be directed toward close proximities and across the globe?
- How can our local efforts also affect global efforts of making disciples?
- How can global efforts also affect local efforts of making disciples?
- What would our small groups and church look like if the world really was our goal?

- **Because the Word is our guarantee.**

Discussion

- Read Acts 1:16. Explain that numerous times throughout the Book of Acts, the phrase “Scripture had to be fulfilled” appears.
- How does this declaration communicate the faithfulness of God and His Word?
- What does this truth indicate about the faithfulness of God and the assurance of His promises?

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Application . . .

- Do we really believe God's Word?
- How do our lives reflect trust and faith in His Word?
- What does our commitment and belief in God's Word indicate about our relationship with God?
- What would our small groups and church look like if we completely believed God's Word as authoritative and true?
- Would your small group look different than it does today?

- **Because the Spirit is here.**

Discussion

- Enlist a learner to read Acts 2:1-13 again.
- Describe the effects of the Spirit's coming.
- How did His presence affect the work of Christ's followers?

Application . . .

- Why do we not have to wait for the Spirit to empower us for His work?
- What would our small groups and church look like if we stopped making excuses and continued with Christ's work in the power of the Holy Spirit?

- **Because the stakes are high.**

Discussion

- Read Acts 2:37-40.
- Why did these people need forgiveness? Why did they need to believe in Christ?
- What happened to them if they did not come to salvation by God's grace through faith in Christ?

Application . . .

- Does the eternal state of someone concern us? Why or why not?
- What do our actions reveal about our belief in eternal consequences?
- Why can an attitude of political correctness in this area endanger the eternal sate of a person?
- What would our small groups and church look like if we acted like the eternal state of every person in the world mattered?

- **Because the glory of Christ leaves us no other option.**

Discussion

- Read Acts 2:36. Who was Jesus?

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- Why did the Lord deserve glory?

Application . . .

- What do our lives reveal that we want more than Christ's glory?
- What does our church reveal that we want more than Christ's glory?
- Why is it difficult to give up tradition, comfort, and self-indulgence in a church setting?
- What would our small groups and church look like if they were completely concerned with giving Christ the glory that He deserves?

- **Because the coming of Christ leaves us with great anticipation.**

Discussion

- Enlist two learners to read Acts 1:11 and Matthew 24:14. What is Christ's plan for the future?
- Has He forgotten about His people?
- Why is He waiting to return for His people?

Application . . .

- Why is keeping a watch for Christ's return a difficult one in our day?
- How can we keep a sense of anticipation for His return?
- What are we to do while we wait for Him to return for us?
- What would our small groups and church look like if we anticipated Christ's return?