

# Disciples on Mission 1



## BIG Idea!

### JESUS CALLS US TO SPEAK INTO INTO CULTURE AND CONTEXT.

What we see here is a masterclass in Gospel contextualisation. Rather than preaching blind, Paul takes the time to learn about his audience, studying their culture and their religious habits. This allows Paul to preach the Gospel in terms that are both familiar and relevant. He even references some of their poetry!

By contextualising his delivery of the Gospel, Paul is able to challenge the idol worship he sees in the city, while also preaching a message of hope.



## DIGGING Deeper!

### Context:

Following a riot in the city of Thessalonica Paul and his team split up, agreeing to rendezvous in Athens. As he waited, Paul couldn't help but notice the city's religious idols.

The city was said to house so many idols in fact, that the first century writer Petronius joked it was easier to find a god than a man in Athens.

Paul tried to reason with the local Jewish community, as well as the Greeks - even sparring with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. Yet, as was typical of Paul's ministry, his marketplace preaching quickly attracted the attention of the city's movers and shakers. Paul was soon brought to a specific place in the Acropolis known as the Areopagus, which translates to 'The Hill of Ares' (or Mars Hill), the Greek god of war. The group who met there were responsible for the civic and religious affairs of the city.

Asked to explain his faith, Paul masterfully critiques Athenian religious practise, whilst also appealing to their cultural sensibilities as evidence of God's existence. In particular, Paul targets an altar to 'an unknown god'. While this provision was in place to avoid offending worshipers of gods not represented in the city, Paul saw it as a logical inconsistency. If these gods are so powerful, he argued, why should they need idols in the first place? Paul contrasts this with the God we see in the book of Genesis. There we see God calling the entire universe into being and creating humans in His image, not because He needed something from them, but so they might have a loving relationship with their creator.



1

### PRAYER POINT

What can you pray for this week for yourself, your family and your friends?

2

### ACTION POINT

How would you respond if someone asked you to explain your faith

3

### MISSION POINT

What might God be asking of you in your context?  
How might you share the Gospel with those around you?

**Start** by checking in with how everyone is doing and ask a state of your soul question.



### Today's Reading:

**Acts 17:22-31**

**READ** the verses out loud.

### THEN and THERE

The Greco-Roman world believed in something called Platonic Dualism. This belief understands the world as two distinct realms; the eternal world of form and the temporary world of matter. This split between what we might think of as spirituality and physicality was considered to be absolute. The idea of Christ's body being resurrected, therefore, (not to mention Jesus being fully God and fully human) was unthinkable.

**DISCUSS** What would it be like to have your whole worldview flipped upside down? Imagine being one of those ancient Greeks hearing the Gospel for the first time.

### QUESTIONS to Consider

1. What sticks out to you about these verses?
2. How would you describe your own context?
3. What's unique and challenging about your context?
4. If you did not know anything about Christianity, how would you like to be told about it?

**PRAY** that God would help each other to share the hope we have in Christ, in terms that are contextually familiar and relevant.

# Disciples on Mission 2



## BIG Idea!

### Pentecost: The Promise of the Spirit

Acts 1 serves as a bridge between two worlds. In Luke's former book 'The Gospel According to Luke' we see Christ's ministry on Earth conclude with the cross. Yet, in his new book Luke shows us that Christ's finished work is the beginning of something new; God's rescue mission to humanity is going global. Although Jesus Himself is ascending to Heaven, His presence will soon dwell in the hearts of all who come after Him. Indeed, the imminent arrival of the Holy Spirit will change everything. New hearts, new life and a new faith community which would come to be known as the Church.



## DIGGING Deeper!

### Context:

Having seen their rabbi betrayed, convicted and executed, it must have seemed to the Disciples that their dream for a free Israel had died with Him. However, standing now in the presence of the resurrected Christ, it seemed only logical that Jesus would finally attend to the messianic duties which were expected of Him. Surely now, He would evict the Romans and restore the kingdom of Israel?

Incredibly, the response Jesus gives shows that the Disciples weren't thinking too boldly, but not boldly enough. For the true Messiah had not come to Earth to address the sufferings of one people, but all people and all creation. Indeed, it is for this purpose that Jesus instructs the Disciples to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the arrival of the Holy Spirit. Though their minds are still set on matters of nationalism, the Disciples will soon discover that the power of the Holy Spirit reaches far deeper than any political force. For through His power, the Spirit will baptise their hearts in a manner not dissimilar to John's baptising of the body with water. An inward transformation which will spur the outward, visible response we see on the day of Pentecost.

And with that, Jesus was taken up before them. Ascending to the presence of the Father, carrying His own humanity with Him. In an ancient world dominated by Greek dualism, the idea that a mortal being could approach the divine was impossible. Yet, Jesus demonstrates that there is now no separation between God and humanity. Through Christ's redemptive work on the cross, we are all welcome in the Father's presence. And not only that, but through the work of the Holy Spirit, God's presence is welcomed into the hearts of all those who accept Jesus as their saviour.



1

### PRAYER POINT

What can you pray for this week for yourself, your family and your friends?

2

### ACTION POINT

How well do I understand the function of Holy Spirit?  
Do I recognise His presence? Do I trust Him?

3

### MISSION POINT

How can the Spirit help us to love those around us? What might that look like for you in your context?

**Start** by checking in with how everyone is doing and ask a state of your soul question.



### Today's Reading:

**Acts 1: 1-11**

**READ** the verses out loud.

### THEN and THERE

Put yourself in the shoes of the Disciples. Imagine seeing Jesus return from death. What would you ask Him?

**Read Digging Deeper.**

**DISCUSS** what are the things you imagine hearing about the Holy Spirit for the first time. How would you explain Him to someone who had never heard of the Spirit before?

### QUESTIONS to Consider

1. What was the first thing you noticed about this passage?
2. What parts of this passage did you find difficult?
3. What parts of this passage did you find encouraging?
4. Do you see an invitation to action? If so what might that be?
5. What does waiting for God look like for you at the moment?

**PRAY** for each other in the space of waiting in our current situations and lives.

# Disciples on Mission 3



## BIG Idea!

### Pentecost: The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Jesus who was the centre of all of the disciples lives had now ascended to be with God. He had left the disciples in a state of unknown and fear. Jesus promised however that if they went to Jerusalem they would receive the Holy Spirit the very presence of God and that they would be empowered to spread the good news far and wide from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth.



## DIGGING Deeper!

### Context:

Pentecost has a multifaceted connection to the Jewish calendar and to our lives today. We see it as a time when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to the first disciples and yet it has other layers from Jewish history that points to the Kingdom of God truly coming to earth in an eternal and significant way.

Pentecost was one of the big feasts in the Jewish calendar and people were expected to come to Jerusalem for the big three. (Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles) Of all three festivals Pentecost would have been frequented by more and from further afield than the others due to the time of year being more favourable for travel. Hence there were Jews from all the neighbouring nations present at this time.

Pentecost literally means fiftieth as it is the 50th day after passover. It is a feast that farmers would bring their first fruits of the harvest to sacrifice in thanksgiving and hope of a plentiful crop. It also signifies the fifty days from the original passover in the Exodus when the Israelites left Egypt and crossed through the Red Sea into the promised land to when God came down and presented himself with Moses on Mt Sinai and gave the torah (law) on stone tablets. How appropriate that this was the time when the gift of the Holy Spirit, the very presence of All Creator God would be given to men and women creating a new exodus with a new temple to empower the mission of heaven coming to earth spreading globally across all nations.

1

### PRAYER POINT

What can you pray for this week for yourself, your family and you friends?

2

### ACTION POINT

Pray for yourself and others on a daily basis that we would be filled by the Holy Spirit so we might reflect the love of God in all our contexts.

3

### MISSION POINT

Let's try to be more aware of when Holy Spirit might be nudging us to love, care, pray and be generous to others in our world.

**Start** by checking in with how everyone is doing and ask a state of your soul question.



### Today's Reading: Acts 2: 1 - 21

**READ** the verses out loud.

Further reading:

Read through to the end verse 41 to complete this part of the pentecost story.

### THEN and THERE

Imagine yourself as one of the characters in the story.

**Read Digging Deeper.**

**DISCUSS** Why was this a perfect time for God to gift the Holy Spirit to his disciples

### QUESTIONS to Consider

1. What sticks out to you about these verses?
2. How does being filled with the Spirit relate to us today?
3. Ephesians 5:18 talks about being filled with the Spirit on an ongoing basis. What does this look like for you?
4. Being filled with the Spirit empowers us to do the impossible in the mission of God. What might this look like for you?
5. Share experiences you have had when you have felt that God has specifically empowered you for a specific task or conversation.

**PRAY** for each other to be filled with the Holy Spirit and expect the impossible.

# Disciples on Mission 4



## BIG Idea!

### MAKING DISCIPLES

The great mission of God is for us to make disciples, not converts, across all nations and baptising them in name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Teaching them to follow in the ways of Jesus the Messiah. This is what discipleship is and any true disciple will be committed to learn and grow to be more like the one whom they follow. God does not leave us alone to fulfil this task however but promises to be with us us forever constantly guiding forgiving and empowering us to be more like him as he transforms us, and all who say yes to him, into his likeness.



## DIGGING Deeper!

### Context:

The final words of a departing loved one carry deep significance, and here we encounter some of Jesus' last words before he leaves his beloved disciples. Matthew records this moment on a mountain—a setting that holds special meaning throughout his Gospel. Key events unfold on mountains: the temptation, the Sermon on the Mount, the transfiguration, and now this final commission. These scenes echo the Exodus story, where God met Moses on a mountain to give instruction and reveal his purposes.

From this mountain, Jesus delivers his final directive, accompanied by a powerful promise: God's presence will remain with his people. This moment signals the continuation of heaven on earth, reversing the separation that began in Eden. Jesus, Emmanuel—"God with us"—assures his followers that he will be with them to the very end of the age.

His call is neither small nor isolated. It is a global mission grounded in divine authority: to make disciples of all nations, to baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and to teach them to obey all that he has commanded. This mission now extends to us, inviting us to participate in God's work—bringing glimpses of heaven to earth in the places where we live, work, and are sent.



1

### PRAYER POINT

What does it look like to pray for the mission of Jesus to continue to grow?

2

### ACTION POINT

Ask God to show you what it looks like for us to be on mission together in the place we live, work and sent?

3

### MISSION POINT

How might you be more outward focussed to express the love and salvation of God to those around you?

**Start** by checking in with how everyone is doing and ask a state of your soul question.



### Today's Reading: Matthew 28:16-20

**READ** the verses out loud.

### THEN and THERE

Consider what it might have been like sitting listening to Jesus for maybe the last time.

**Read** Digging Deeper.

**DISCUSS** what would it have been like for the disciples on that mountain to hear Jesus saying these things.

### QUESTIONS to Consider

1. What sticks out to you about these verses?
2. If Jesus said these things to you and your friends how would you respond?
3. In what ways do you feel a part of this global mission? In what ways do you feel sent by Jesus?
4. Jesus seems to be passing on his authority to the Disciples to fulfil the mission. What does this mean for us?
5. How does the promise of Jesus' presence being with us to the end of the age help us being on mission

**PRAY** for each other that we would see how God wants us to be a part of his global mission.