

... In My Church's Jerusalem—The Jerusalem mission field is the surrounding community where you live, work, shop, play, and go to school. And it requires just as much intentionality as the mission fields of Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth.

“When they observed the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed and knew that they had been with Jesus. And since they saw the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in response. After they had ordered them to leave the Sanhedrin, they conferred among themselves, saying, “What should we do with these men? For an obvious sign, evident to all who live in Jerusalem, has been done through them, and we cannot deny it” (Acts 4:13-16, HCSB)!

• God calls Christians out into their local communities, even to people who need a new or different church.

For information and help in embracing The Acts 1:8 Challenge, visit www.ActsOne8.com.

Adapted from *The Acts 1:8 Challenge: Empowering the Church to be On Mission*, by Nate Adams. This 2005 Doctrine Study is available from LifeWay Christian Resources at www.lifeway.com or 1 800 458-2772.

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Our Church On Mission

... Embracing the Acts 1:8 Challenge of Jesus
Acts 1:1-8 •••• January 9, 2005 •••• Nate Adams

An unlikely metaphor for the church today:

The Wizard of Oz

To join God in His mission, I need:

1. A Global PRIORITY: I understand that the focus of the risen Lord Jesus is on the kingdom of God.

“After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3, NIV).

Two predominant value systems among Christians:

“The church is for me.”

“The church is for the world.”

2. A Global PERSPECTIVE: I see history and the world from God's point of view.

“So when they met together, they asked him, ‘Lord are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority’” (Acts 1:6-7, NIV).

God's history-long, worldwide mission:

(The Bible summarized in 30 words)

1. God's Glory Radiating (see Ps. 19:1-2; John 17:4-5)
2. God's Creation Reflecting (see Ps. 8:3-5; 13:1-2)
3. God's People Rebelling (see Gen. 6:5-6)
4. God's Love Reaching (see Gen. 12:1-3)
5. God's Nation Revealing (see Ex. 19:3-8; Isa. 49:3)
6. God's Nation Resisting (see Ezek. 36:19-21)
7. God's Son Restoring (see John 1:14; Heb. 1:1-3)
8. God's Church Receiving (see John 14:12; Acts 2:1-4)
9. God's Church Radiating (see Matt. 24:14; Acts 13:44-49)
10. God's Redeemed Responding (see Ps. 86:9; Rev. 7:9-10)

3. A Global **POWER** and **PLAN**: I receive and radiate through my church.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8, NIV).

“I assure you: The one who believes in Me will also do the works that I do. And he will do even greater works than these, because I am going to the Father” (John 14:12, HCSB).

“Nevertheless, I am telling you the truth. It is for your benefit that I go away, because if I don’t go away the Counselor will not come to you. If I go, I will send Him to you. When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment” (John 16:7-8, HCSB).

• Being a witness with the power of the Holy Spirit is like working with the wind.

4. A Global **PARTICIPATION**: I actively help my church spread the gospel . . .

. . . to the Ends of the Earth—There are people groups in the world that are waiting for our church to bring them the gospel.

“All the nations You have made will come and bow down before you, Lord, and will honor Your name. For You are great and perform wonders; You alone are God” (Ps. 86:9-10, HCSB).

• IMB missionaries are now reaching almost 200 new people groups each year. Yet 1.5 billion people in 5,000 people groups still have little or no access to the gospel.

“This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed in all the world as a testimony to all nations. And then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14, HCSB).

. . . In My Church’s Samaria—For today’s church, as for the early church, Samaria is “a close-by place that we rarely visit,” and Samaritans are “those who live relatively near us, but who are not like us.”

“Now he [Jesus] had to go through Samaria” (John 4:4, NIV).

“Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, ‘How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?’ For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, “Give Me a drink,” you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water”’ (John 4:9-10, NKJV).

• God calls Christians to personalize the gospel for the diverse peoples in and near their homeland.

• It is estimated that in North America 7 out of 10 people do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. North America’s lostness is as deep as the world’s is wide.

. . . In My Church’s Judea—If Samaritans are seen as “those who live relatively near us, but are not like us,” then Judeans can be seen as “those who live relatively near us, who in many ways ARE like us.”

“For you, brothers, became imitators of God’s churches in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, since you have also suffered the same things from people of your own country, just as they did from the Jews” (1 Thess. 2:14, HCSB).

• God calls Christians to nearby people who may share regional identity or religious familiarity but not real fellowship with Christ.

• One great challenge of the Judea mission field is the barrier of “presumed familiarity” that people have with the gospel. Those who were lost in a works-based religion in the first century were likely to declare “I’m Roman” or “I’m Jewish” just as those lost in the Judea mission field of the church today might declare “I’m Baptist” or “I’m Catholic.”