



Getting Started

Learning Goal: Students will be introduced to Jesus’ Acts 1:8 challenge to reach people in all parts of the world with the gospel.

What You Need to Know: Jesus’ last words to His disciples apply to all of us, no matter our ages. Children and young adults in your classroom are called to share the good news.

Key/Memory Verses: Acts 1:7-8

Supporting Verses:

- Acts 1:1-11
- John 6:35

Prepare Ahead

- ▶ Enlist a current or retired missionary (or a missions volunteer) to briefly share how he or she came to serve as a missionary (or go on a mission trip) and what he or she desired to accomplish. Provide this person with a list of the unscrambled words and ask him or her to focus the testimony on as many of these concepts as fit his or her situation.
- ▶ Write the following scrambled words on poster board or a large sheet of paper:
 - aepprr (prepare)
 - nrela (learn)
 - yapr (pray)
 - vieg (give)
 - og (go)
 - left (tell)
 - neds (send)
 - plumlity (multiply)
- ▶ Before your students arrive for class, hide all the bread in one place somewhere in the room.
- ▶ At the end of this series, one option is to plan and carry out a specific mission project in a partnership with another group. This partnership can be with a group of youth in another church or with a youth or adult group in your own church. Talk with your church’s missions leadership or your pastor about possibilities for the project and suggestions of groups with whom to partner.
- ▶ Make copies of Learner Worksheets 1-A and 1-B for all students.

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Acts 1:8 Challenge – www.ActsOne8.com
- International Mission Board – www.imb.org
- North American Mission Board – www.namb.net
- Southern Baptist Convention – www.sbc.net

Supply List

- Toaster (unplugged; you may need more than one if you have a large group)
- Loaf of bread (hidden)
- Oleo or butter
- Various bread toppings (cinnamon, sugar, jam)
- Utensils
- Paper plates
- Bibles (one per student)
- 11-inch x 14-inch sheets of paper (or larger)
- Pens/pencils/markers
- Envelopes
- Whiteboard or chalkboard
- Markers or chalk
- Poster board
- Missionary/missions volunteer
 - Jar or container
 - Enough slips of paper for each student
- For alternate older student activity: Blindfold
- For alternate challenge activity: A small notebook for each student to be used as a journal each session

Leader Background Study



“Can you hear me now?”

Students will recognize the slogan as belonging to a wireless telephone company, but it could just as well capture the focus of Acts 1:8. When the risen Jesus told His shaken disciples that they would be His witnesses throughout the earth, they must have thought they had a bad connection.

“Huh? What did you say? Witnesses to the ends of the earth? We’re in hiding, Lord! They’re trying to kill us! There must be some mistake ...”

There was no mistake. Jesus’ last words on earth introduced an ongoing mission of the church that is as relevant today as it was then.

In the next sessions, leaders and students will work together to explore and respond as they prepare, learn, pray, give, go, tell, send, and multiply, just as Jesus instructed.

By the way, something interesting follows Jesus’ prime directive in the first chapter of Acts: the second chapter of Acts. We are not alone in our quest to evangelize the world. The Holy Spirit is alive and well and working in the hearts and minds of believers, just as Jesus promised He would.

Batteries not included? Not to worry. The Holy Spirit is our power source, and He never needs recharging.

As preparation for the unit, read the entire Book of Acts after asking the Lord to grant you insight and to bless your students through the Word. If possible, read the book in one sitting, paying close attention to the role of the Holy Spirit in the formation and growth of the early church.

Carefully review the Learner Worksheets (1-A, 1-B) and Scripture references (Acts 1:1-11 and John 6:35). Write down any questions that occur to you as you study the Scriptures. Ask yourself:

- What do I know about the early church and Jesus’ Great Commission?
- What do I want to know?
- How will I learn?
- How will I apply what I learn in my own life?

These are the questions that can help drive your study, and in turn help you guide the study of your students. Each of them could benefit from a similar approach.





Connect: “Batteries Not Included” (15 minutes)

Welcome students.

Say: Today, we’re having toast. I need a couple of volunteers.

After students come forward, **wait** for someone to point out that there is no bread. That’s a problem! **Turn** the hunt for bread into a game by having students play Twenty Questions until they pinpoint its location. (**Follow** traditional rules, where students are allowed to ask only yes or no questions.) **Be careful** not to let one or two students dominate the game; you might want to place everyone’s name in a container and call on students when their names are drawn.

Once the group has located the bread, **allow** a couple of minutes for the students to figure out that the toaster is not plugged in. After they have made the toast, **ask** your helpers to **distribute** it to class members (always inquire about allergies when using food products).

As students enjoy the snack, **ask** the following questions. **Invite** a student to record answers on the board.

1. What did we need in order to make toast? (List all responses.)
2. All of those things are good to have, but what did we *need* to have? (**Ask** your volunteer to circle or underline bread and toaster. The group may have listed electricity or something like that; you may need to help younger students with the concept of power source.)

Once students determine that you can’t make toast without bread, a toaster, or a power source, **say:** In a way, we’re going to learn how God makes toast.



Alternate Activity (Older Students): “Blind Obstacle Course”

Arrange an obstacle course in the room using chairs, tables, and perhaps other students. **Blindfold** volunteers (or have them keep their eyes closed) and have them try to make their way through the course. After several have attempted the course, **repeat** the process with other volunteers, this time with you or a student helping guide the volunteers through the maze with voice commands. If time permits, go through the process one more time, this time with students going with the volunteers, holding their arms, and guiding them through

the course. **Debrief** the activity with questions about which process was easier and why.

Ask how the activity reflects the role of the Holy Spirit in a Christian’s life.

Life is full of spiritual obstacles, and God has provided His Spirit to walk along with Christians and help guide them through the obstacles in life.



Coach: "THE Power Source" (35 minutes)

Explain that Luke, the writer of Acts, provided a very good record of what happened to the early Christians after Jesus returned to heaven, and that the group will be spending this and the next sessions learning about what happened and how it affects our roles as Christians today.

Draw a timeline on the board covering the birth of Christ (around 0) to 60 A.D. **Place** a cross in the middle and **mention** that Jesus' earthly life covers about half the chart; the Book of Acts, to the right of the cross, covers approximately 30 years after His death and resurrection. (You may wish to **point out** that we don't know the exact date of Jesus' birth, but scholars think He was born within a few years of the "0" according to our calendar.)

Explain that in the next few weeks, you will be focusing on the right half of the timeline.

Say: Imagine that you are one of Jesus' apostles. You were with Him when He was put on trial and executed. Then, to your amazement, He appeared and spent more than a month hanging out. What do you think He did during that time?

(Possible answers: Perhaps He re-taught His disciples some of the things He had pointed out before, now that He really had their attention; maybe He visited His friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus; it could be that He spent time with His immediate family, including His mother and brothers.)

Ask: What would you, as one of His disciples, expect Him to do next?

Draw a circle on the board with a question mark; **create** a web around the center circle, connecting all reasonable answers to it. **Lead** a discussion in which students explore their thoughts regarding what the disciples might have expected Jesus to do. After discussion, **explain** that Scripture does offer us some insights regarding what was going on in the minds of Jesus' followers. **Direct** students to open their Bibles to Acts 1.

Read aloud (or have a student read) Acts 1:1-8. **Ask** questions such as:

1. To whom did Luke address the book that we call Acts?
A man named Theophilus.
2. What did Luke say his first narrative (the Gospel of Luke) was about?
"All that Jesus began to do and teach until the day He was taken up."
3. To whom did Jesus give orders, and through whom does He give orders?
He gave orders to the apostles whom He chose, through the Holy Spirit.

4. After His resurrection, what did Jesus do for 40 days?
He presented Himself to the apostles, proving He was alive and talking about the kingdom of God.
5. What did Jesus command His apostles to do?
Not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the Father's promise.
6. What did Jesus say about baptism?
He said that John baptized with water, but that they, the apostles, would be baptized with the Holy Spirit within a few days.
7. What question did the apostles ask?
"Lord, at this time are You restoring the kingdom to Israel?"
8. How did Jesus reply to their question?
"It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Read aloud (or have a student read) Acts 1:9-11. **Ask** questions such as:

1. How did Jesus leave earth?
He was taken up while the disciples watched, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.
2. After Jesus left, who appeared?
Two men in white clothing.
3. What did the men in white say?
"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up into heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you have seen Him going into heaven."
4. Based upon your reading of the passage, what do you believe the apostles thought might happen?
They may have thought Jesus was on the verge of establishing His kingdom on earth. In fact, they might have been looking forward to seeing Jesus "straighten out" their enemies! They may have wondered what important roles they would play in the new kingdom.
5. What emotions might the apostles have felt when Jesus rose into heaven?
(If time allows, list student responses on the board. Possible answers may include fear, anxiety, excitement, awe, curiosity, and even abandonment; after all, they had just received their leader back from the dead, and now He had left again.)

Activity: “Scrambled Words”

Display the poster with the scrambled words that you prepared ahead of time. **State** that they represent the heart of your study for the next several weeks. **Direct** students to work in groups of 2 to 3 students to unscramble the words. **Record** the solved words on the poster board. (**Save** it for use in future sessions.) **Ask** what the words have to do with students as Christians.

Missionary Testimony

Introduce the missionary for the testimony. If time permits, **allow** students to ask questions of the missionary, then ask how each element was present in the missionary’s experience.

Mention that a podcast, “Casting a Vision for Missions,” is available for any of your group who wish to listen to it. Students will find the podcast at www.ActsOne8.com.

Invite students to turn to John 6:35 and Acts 1:7-8. **Direct** volunteers to read aloud each passage. **Ask** the following:

- For the Christian, who is the bread?
Jesus is the bread.
- According to Acts 1:8, what did Jesus say His followers would receive?
They would receive power.
- Who is the power source?
The power source is the Holy Spirit.

Activity: “On Mission”

Distribute Learner Worksheet 1-A and **review** the directions. **Emphasize** that students should memorize Acts 1:7-8 by the next session. You may wish to **assign** partners who can keep each other accountable when it comes to completing Learner Worksheets and other assignments throughout the unit. **Remind** students to review the Acts 1:7-8 passage daily.



Challenge “Acts 1:8 Command” (10 minutes)

Challenge students to remember when they eat toast during the week that Jesus is “the bread of life,” and when they plug into the power source (the Holy Spirit), good things happen.

Explain that during the next sessions, students will explore how the Holy Spirit has worked through Christians to fulfill Jesus’ Acts 1:8 command.

Distribute Learner Worksheet 1-B. **Direct** students’ attention to the challenge responses, and **invite** them to complete that portion of the worksheet. **Review** challenge responses by listing them on the board.

Allow a few minutes for students to think about whose names they would like to include in the right column.



Alternate Activity (Older Students): “Up for the Challenge”

Direct students to choose one individual whose name they listed on Learner Worksheet 1-B and **interview** him or her (via telephone, e-mail, or in person) in the coming week. **Instruct** students to ask questions such as the following, plus others they think would be interesting:

- How are you involved in missions?
- What prepared you for missions?
- What are your greatest challenges in missions?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in empowering you to do missions work?

Direct students to be prepared to report their findings in the next session.

Journaling Option



Give each student a notebook and a pen. **Explain** that each student will be keeping a journal to show what is being learned about Jesus’ Acts 1:8 challenge and what the challenge means to them. **Direct** students to write the Acts 1:8 verse on the first page of the journal.

Explain: This verse is the basis for Southern Baptist missions. Southern Baptists believe that missions is not just for adults. Missions includes everyone. Also **direct** students to write down the following words:

- | | | | |
|-----------|--------|--------|------------|
| • prepare | • pray | • go | • send |
| • learn | • give | • tell | • multiply |

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On Mission

Directions: Use the word bank to fill in the spaces to complete the following passage from Acts 1:7-8 (Holman Christian Standard Bible). At the beginning of the next session, you will practice saying the passage aloud with your group.

Word Bank			
authority	Samaria	times	Father
power	earth	Judea	witnesses
Holy Spirit	ends		

(Jesus) said to them:

“It is not for you to know _____ or periods that the _____ has set by His own _____. But you will receive _____ when the _____ has come upon you, and you will be My _____ in Jerusalem, in all _____ and _____, and to the _____ of the _____.”

Review this Scripture passage daily. As you pray, ask God to make you aware of places in your community where you can be a witness. List five of these for the next session.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Workers Who Are Up for the Challenge

Review: Fill in the eight challenge responses. Write the name of someone you know (he or she may be a friend, youth pastor, teacher, family member, or someone else) who engages in this activity as it relates to missions.

p _____	_____
l _____	_____
p _____	_____
g _____	_____
g _____	_____
t _____	_____
s _____	_____
m _____	_____

Older students: Choose one individual whose name you listed above and interview him or her (via telephone, e-mail, or in person) in the coming week. If you are keeping a journal, record your answers in the journal. Ask questions such as the following, plus others you think would be interesting:

- How are you involved in missions?
- What prepared you for missions?
- What are your greatest challenges in missions?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in empowering you to do missions work?