

ACTS 1:8 | Session 11: “Pass It On”

Getting Started

Learning Goal: Students will understand that in order for the church to carry out its Great Commission, we must multiply followers of Jesus Christ.

What You Need to Know: When we seek to multiply followers of Jesus Christ, we can emulate the early church, whose members gathered together regularly to praise God. Fellowship and a sense of community are important factors in creating an environment in which people are drawn to the church and its mission.

Key/Memory Verses: Acts 2:46-47

Supporting Verses: Matthew 13:1-9,18-23,31-32

Supply List

- Bibles (one per student)
- Scrambled-words poster from the first session
- Memory verses (Acts 2:46-47)
- Your copy of Learner Worksheet 10-B (for review)
- Paper/pencils
- Markers
- Glue
- Calculators (one per small group)
- Pennies (one per small group)
- Small packages of pumpkin or sunflower seeds (one package per student)
- Maps of your community (AAA-style, computer-generated, or hand-drawn)
- Copies of Learner Worksheets 11-A and 11-B, for all students (depending upon the size of your group, you may need to make copies of the second sheet of 11-B)
- For alternate challenge activity: A small notebook for each student to be used as a journal each session

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



Prepare Ahead

- ▶ Complete Learner Worksheet 11-A.
- ▶ Gather or prepare enough maps for each student to have one, plus a master map.

Leader Background Study

How does one create the sense of community that is evident in the early church? Christians gathered together daily to worship, share meals, and encourage one another. In our scattered and busy lifestyles, it may be difficult to imagine the “church” being something that fellowshiped every day of the week instead of only on Sundays, Wednesdays, and the occasional “extra” Bible study or social activity. As you meditate on the memory verses for this week (Acts 2:46-47), ask the Lord to reveal to you ways in which you can encourage a sense of support and community within your class. It could be that a midweek Bible study is a possibility. It could be student-led and hosted. Or perhaps an after-school Bible club could be organized. At least for now, student-led Bible clubs are permitted in public schools, so you may wish to research that. Find out if there are clubs operating in your community’s schools. If there are, contact those in charge and determine whether the clubs are a good fit for your students. If not, consider starting one.

In this lesson, students will examine the parable of the sower, a story Jesus told that is recorded in Matthew 13. Read the entire chapter, and using a good commentary, review each of the parables and make notes regarding their meanings and purposes. As you study, record your own experiences with Christian community. When have you felt most connected to others who shared your faith? What were the factors that helped create that community? What were the benefits? Were there any hurdles to overcome? If so, what were the solutions? If you were a member of a Bible study, a high school- or college-related group, a Sunday School class, or a care group that really clicked, reflect on the reasons that the group worked. Be ready to share with your students so that they can gain a better understanding of the importance of community within the body of Christ.

Connect: “Multiplication Mania” (10 minutes)

Review the Bible verse from last week and **ask** students if there were any questions regarding Learner Worksheet 10-B. **Allow** time for discussion.

Divide students into small groups (four to five students per group). **Distribute** calculators, Learner Worksheet 11-A, pencils, and pennies. **Review** instructions and **assist** students if they are confused regarding the assignment. You might want to **invite** the class to share one or two predictions before groups begin their work. When students have completed the exercise, **invite** them to share their predictions. Did anyone have any idea that doubling a single penny could generate so much money so quickly?

Ask students to imagine what would happen in the world if Christians were to double their numbers every year ... or even every decade. **Inform** students that they will be reading a Scripture passage that speaks of some pretty remarkable multiplication.



Coach: “Growing a Community” (35 minutes)

Ask students to share their experiences in gardening. Did they grow beans in containers in elementary school? Has anyone planted flower bulbs or helped their parents with a garden? If any of your students live on farms or have particularly large gardens, ask them to discuss what it takes to successfully produce a crop (good soil, water, nutrients, sunshine, and so forth). **Ask:** What does it take to grow a Christian community? **Write** answers on the board. **Direct** students to open their Bibles to Matthew 13. Explain that the passages have to do with multiplication—specifically, the kind that God specializes in when He is growing the church. **Tell** students that they will be reading the parable of the sower, a story that Jesus told. **Invite** a student to read Matthew 13:1-9.

Following the reading, **ask** questions such as:

1. What happened to the seed that fell along the path?
“The birds came and ate them.”
2. What happened to the seed that fell on rocky ground?
“They sprang up quickly since the soil wasn’t deep,” but because “they had no root, they withered” in the hot sun.
3. What happened to the seed that fell among thorns?
The thorns choked them.
4. What happened to the seed that fell on good ground?
They produced a crop that was many times what was sown.

Have students return to their small groups. **Distribute** paper and markers, and **ask** each group to divide one sheet into four equal parts and number the boxes 1-4. **Invite** them to illustrate what happened to the seed in each of the four cases that Jesus mentioned.

After students have completed their drawings, **inform** them that you are going to read Jesus’ explanation of the parable about the seed. **Ask** them to look at their drawings as you read Matthew 13:18-23.

When you have finished reading, ask questions such as:

1. To whom did Jesus compare the seed that fell along the path?
He compared them to people who hear the word about the kingdom but don’t understand, and the evil one comes along and takes away the seed that was sown.
2. To whom did Jesus compare the seed sown on rocky ground?
He compared them to people who hear the word and receive it gladly, but whose acceptance is superficial and without roots; when times get hard, they stumble.
3. To whom did Jesus compare the seed sown among the thorns?
He compared them to people who hear the word, but whose worries and temptations of the world choke the word so that it won’t grow.
4. To whom did Jesus compare the seed that fell on good ground?
He compared them to people who hear and understand the word, and who bear fruit that is many times what was sown.

Ask: What kinds of things can we do to make sure that the seed we are sowing is falling on good ground? **Draw** a simple tree on the board. As students brainstorm, **write** answers at the ends of branches. Answers may include: Make sure we are praying for a good harvest; establish relationships with people; study the Bible so that we know the truth; participate in church-related activities that help us grow as believers and establish relationships with other Christians; learn as much as we can about missions. **Tell** students that no matter what their ages or resources, they can contribute to the church’s efforts to fulfill the Great Commission.

Invite students to turn to Matthew 13:31-32. **Read** the passage aloud. **Explain** that a mustard seed is extremely tiny and that those who heard Jesus’ story must have been amazed that He compared it to the kingdom of heaven. God specializes in the impossible, though, and transforming that tiny seed into a magnificent tree is not a problem for Him. It’s the same way with the church. God can take something very small—whatever we have to offer Him—and transform it into something of huge importance.

Activity: “Do You See(d) the Need?”

Distribute the pumpkin or sunflower seed packets. **Invite** students to open the packets if they wish and to eat the seed if they choose. Before they do, however, ask them to set aside five seed (each) to represent five individuals in their neighborhoods or schools whom they would like to see come to Christ. Each person should write these persons’ names or initials in box 4 of their group drawing and glue his or her five seed onto the picture.

Ask students to make it a point to pray for those “seed” names in the following weeks and to look for opportunities to invite those individuals to fun events in which they can meet and get to know other members of the youth group. If there are no suitable events scheduled, take a few minutes and plan something that could serve as an informal outreach.

Post the drawings in the room and **allow** students to examine the work of their peers. **Remind** students that growth takes time, and that when it comes to multiplying disciples for Christ, the Holy Spirit will provide the necessary nutrients.



Challenge: “Everyday Things” (15 minutes)

Introduce the memory verses for this week, Acts 2:46-47.

Ask: What does the Scripture say the early Christians did every day?

“They devoted themselves to meeting together”; they ate meals together; they ate “with gladness and simplicity of heart”; they praised God; they had “favor with all the people.”

Ask: What did the Lord do every day?

He added to those who were being saved.

Point out that as the Christians did the ordinary things that they were supposed to be doing, God increased their numbers.

Ask: What ordinary things should we be doing on a daily basis?

(Answers will vary; they could include meeting together for worship, praying, supporting one another, encouraging one another, socializing with one another, getting along with one another.)

Activity: “Road Map to Encouragement”

Point out that in the early Christian communities, groups of followers lived close to each other, and it was probably easier for them to meet together frequently. In our communities, when you often need transportation in order to get together, daily contact isn't always possible. However, there are other ways to keep in touch. **Distribute** the maps (one for each student) and **post** an additional map on the board. **Tell** students that as a group they are going to create a class directory that will enable members to support one another throughout the week. **Invite** students to pinpoint their own homes on the map; at the right spot, each should place a star and write his or her name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address. When students finish filling out one map, they should rotate the maps until each has filled out every map (including the one on the board, which will serve as a master copy).

If you have any personal experiences to share regarding Christian community (as suggested in the Leader Background Study), do so now.

Encourage students to support one another. **Challenge** them to contact at least one different class member every day, via telephone or e-mail if necessary. Let them know it isn't necessary to say or write a great deal; sending a favorite Bible verse, quote, or short note is sufficient.

Journaling Option



Read Acts 2:41-47. Write down your thoughts of what it means to be devoted? How would being devoted to God's Word change your life and witness to others?

Distribute Learner Worksheet 11-B. **Direct** students to enter the information from their maps onto the worksheet so that they will have a backup copy of the information; this will also help students keep track of whom they contact.

Multiplication Mania

Directions: You have one penny. If you double the penny by multiplying by 2, you will have two pennies. If you double those pennies by multiplying by 2, you will have four pennies. In the chart below, predict how many times you will have to double the pennies (by multiplying by 2) in order to reach the number in the right column. (You will not end up with even numbers; estimate the turn at which the total goes over 1,000.)

1	1 penny X 2 =	2 pennies
2	2 pennies X 2 =	4 pennies
3	3 pennies X 2 =	8 pennies
?		1,000 pennies
?		10,000 pennies
?		100,000 pennies
?		1,000,000 pennies

Now it's time to test your theory. Assign one student to operate the calculator and one to fill in the grid below in order to determine how many times you need to double your original penny in order to reach the amounts in the right column. Keep a running total.

Record the number of times you multiply by 2 here:
--

?	1,000 pennies
?	10,000 pennies
?	100,000 pennies
?	1,000,000 pennies

Discuss: Were you surprised by the number of turns it took to reach each of the totals?

Multiply Multiply Multiply Multiply Multiply Multiply Multiply Multiply Multiply Multiply

