

### INTERNET RESOURCES

Acts 1:8 Challenge – [www.ActsOne8.com](http://www.ActsOne8.com)

International Mission Board – [www.imb.org](http://www.imb.org)

North American Mission Board – [www.namb.net](http://www.namb.net)

Southern Baptist Convention – [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net)

## Getting Started

**Learning Goal:** Learners will become aware of God’s purpose for the church to reach the lost world with the good news.

**What You Need to Know:** God poured out His Holy Spirit on all Christians (and therefore on the church) to empower us to carry out His purpose to reach the lost. This power helps the church today—even children who are believers—to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

**Memory Verse:** Acts 1:8

**Supporting Verses:** Acts 2:1-8

## Supply List

- To be used for every session:
  - White board and marker (or chalkboard and chalk)
  - Large poster to list each session’s treasure clue/memory verse (a large piece of brown wrapping paper for parcels might work best)
  - Folder for each child who will attend to keep treasure clues (large pocket folders or small spiral notepads, or make your own notepads using scrap paper)
  - Treasure chest
  - Bible for each child who will attend
- Biblical map showing Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria
- Whistle or another signal device
- Construction paper
- Paper for drawing
- Paper strips
- Pen or pencil for each learner
- Box to serve as a voting box
- Brown construction paper
- Treasure chest patterns (provided with this lesson)
- Treasure-themed decorations (if desired)



## Prepare Ahead

- ▶ **Write** the memory verse on piece of construction paper and **place** it in the treasure chest.
- ▶ **Write** the entire memory verse on pieces of construction paper of different colors (depending on the group size).  
**Cut up** each copy of the memory verse into puzzle pieces so that there are enough puzzle pieces for each child.
- ▶ **Copy** treasure chest patterns onto brown construction paper and **cut out** one for each child.
- ▶ Before children arrive for class:
  - **Post** the map and brown paper (for treasure clues) on the wall.
  - **Hide** the puzzle pieces around the room.
  - **Decorate** with other treasure-themed items (if desired).

# Leader Background Study

Welcome to the Acts 1:8 Challenge study. Jesus' last words, recorded by each of the Gospels in addition to Acts, show Jesus' priority to reach the lost. These commands are a powerful challenge to all Christians.

This command and this mission from Jesus found in Acts 1:8 have been one of the primary defining characteristics of Southern Baptists as a denomination. Missions and cooperative efforts to provide for missions and missionaries are central to the Southern Baptist identity. This mission is also the purpose for this study.

In this session, children will look at their church as a depiction of the universal church. We know that Acts 1:8 and other similar Scriptures (such as Matthew 28:18-20) are direct commands for God's people. We also understand that the church is the cooperative body of believers. We can help children grasp the concept that if they are Christians, then they are a part of the church—both the one they attend and the entire group of believers in the world. When children understand this idea, they can understand that as a part of the church, they are receivers of this command. All Christians are responsible for carrying out Jesus' command in the best way we can through the power and leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Children are to help people know about Jesus as His witnesses. He has called us to witness to people all over the world because people are His priority. God, Creator of all things, has no need of material things, money, or prestige. Everything belongs to Him already. Instead, Jesus values most of all people to worship Him. God has given the church the purpose of sharing salvation with all peoples of the world. (See Ephesians 3:8-12.)

“The church fulfills its role as it gathers worshipers from the peoples of the world as if it were collecting treasure to present to its beloved King,”—Nate Adams in his book, *The Acts 1:8 Challenge*.

Beginning with this lesson and continuing throughout the remaining sessions, children will identify themselves as treasure hunters who have received a mission to search for God's greatest treasures—worshipers from all over the world. They will begin to build a treasure map which defines God's plan to reach the lost. Children will be able to define the purpose of the church and learn that God wants to use each child and each church to be treasure hunters.

God Himself began the treasure hunt by empowering Jesus' disciples on Pentecost. (See Acts 2:1-8.) As the disciples were all gathered together in Jerusalem, God poured out the Holy Spirit in tongues of fire. Soon these followers of Jesus were unable to contain themselves. They began to testify to what they had seen and heard. At that time, the city was full of Jews from all over the Roman world in observance of Pentecost. Each person heard the good news about the Messiah in his own language by the power of the Holy Spirit. This same Holy Spirit empowers the church today to continue the purpose of reaching people all over the world.

## onnect: “What Is Our Mission?” (15 minutes)

As children arrive, **give** each one a piece of paper. **Ask** each child to draw a picture of your church. **Encourage** children to add details to show what people do at church. When everyone has arrived, **ask** children to turn over the paper and write or draw why they think we go to church. When everyone has finished, **ask** each child to share. **Tell** children that each church does many different activities and that their church probably looks different than any other church. **Share** with children that even though every church does things differently, all Christian churches have the same mission.

**Guide** the children to stand up and walk around. **Make** the signal sound (whistle). When you say, “Our mission is ...” each child stops and tells a partner what he thinks the church's mission might be. **Repeat** the activity two or three times until children have moved around the room several times.

## C oach: “Hidden Clues” (35 minutes)

**Announce** that clues to the mission are hidden around the room. These clues are puzzle pieces. Each child needs to find one puzzle piece. When you say go, each child finds a piece and brings it back to the table or large group area. If you have more than one puzzle, children put together each set of puzzle pieces by the color of the paper.

After all the pieces have been found, **help** group members assemble the puzzles and discover the messages written on them. When each message has been read, **encourage** the group to assemble in a semicircle around the treasure chest near the treasure map posted on the wall.

**Open** the treasure chest and **reveal** the original copy of Acts 1:8.

**Say:** Each week you will be learning from God’s Word about the mission He has for every Christian and every church. According to today’s treasure map piece, we are to be witnesses to tell the world about Jesus.

**Show** children where Acts 1:8 is in your Bible and **help** them locate the verse in their Bibles. **Guide** children to read the verse several times. **Ask** children to read the verse aloud together. Then **encourage** the girls to read it together. Next the boys will read the verse.

**Ask:** What places does Jesus tell us to be witnesses?  
*Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

**Help** learners locate Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria on the map you have posted.

**Attach** today’s verse to the treasure map.

**Say:** Each week we will add to the treasure map. It guides us with verses from the Bible. The map will help us be treasure hunters.

**Ask:** What do you think of when you hear the word *treasure*?  
*Gold, jewels, money, pirates.*

**Remind** children that although many people view money or other valuable things as treasure, God is not worried about those things. God owns everything, so things are not the treasure He is seeking. **Tell** children they will do some activities to learn about what God treasures most.



## **A**ctivity Option 1: “What God Treasures Most/Group Meetings”

**Form** groups of no more than five. **Ask** groups to decide together what they believe God treasures most. **Remind** children to think about the mission command that you read in the Bible as they decide their answer. **Give** one group member a piece of paper and ask him to be the listener. **Tell** him to write every idea the group mentions and then circle the one that the group agrees is the most important to God. **Encourage** members to keep their answer secret from other groups by working quietly. **Give** each listener a second piece of paper to write the group's final answer. **Tell** children to be ready to reveal their answers when they hear the signal whistle.

At your signal, **ask** boys and girls to share their final answers. **Give** feedback to each group based on their answers. **Guide** children to the understanding that God treasures people the most. Searching for people and telling them about Jesus are the mission for every person and church.

Tell students that in the next session, they will learn how our treasure map will help us be God's kind of treasure hunters—the kind who find people who need to know Him.



## Challenge: “How Do We Witness?” (15 minutes)

**Give** each child a treasure chest shape. **Ask** each child to copy this session’s memory verse on it to take home to study.

**Challenge** learners to say the verse as they are writing it.

**Ask:** Can anyone say the memory verse now without looking?

After copying the memory verse, boys and girls turn over the treasure chest and draw a picture of what God treasures most on the back. **Remind** children that God loves all people—men, women, boys, and girls from places all over the world—just as the verse says.

**Draw** on the board a man to symbolize a doctor.

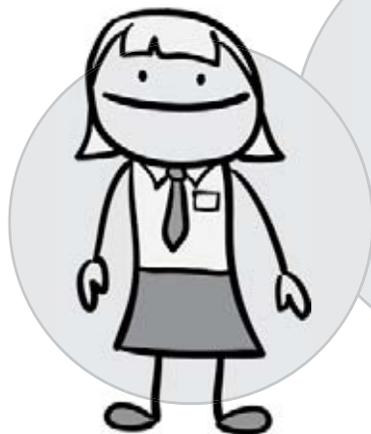
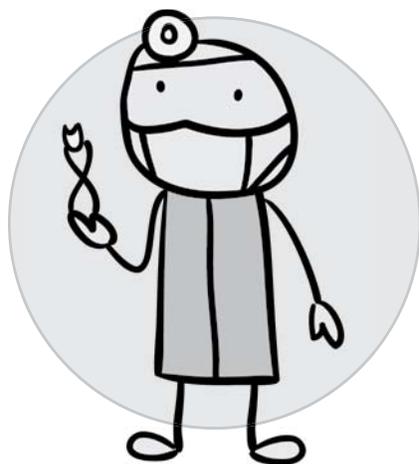
**Ask:** How can you be a witness to this doctor this week?  
*Tell him or her that Jesus heals people just as he or she works to do. Pray for him or her to help people. Ask him or her to come to your church.*

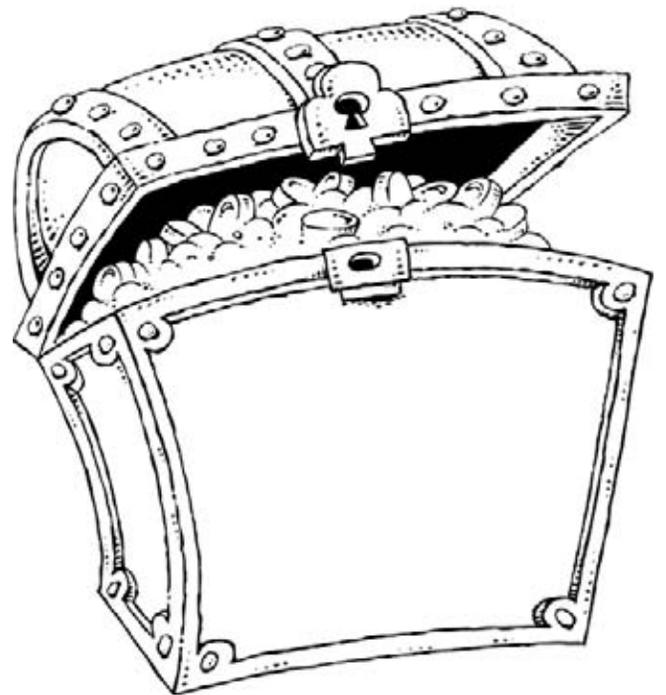
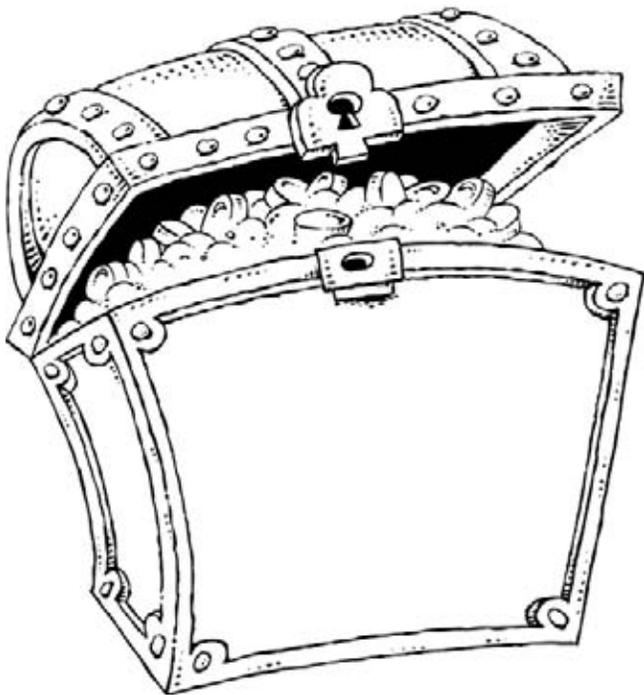
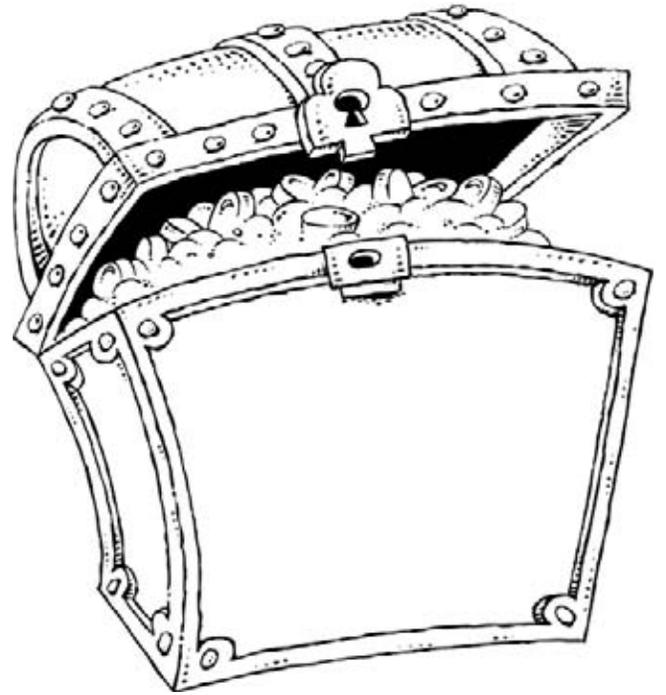
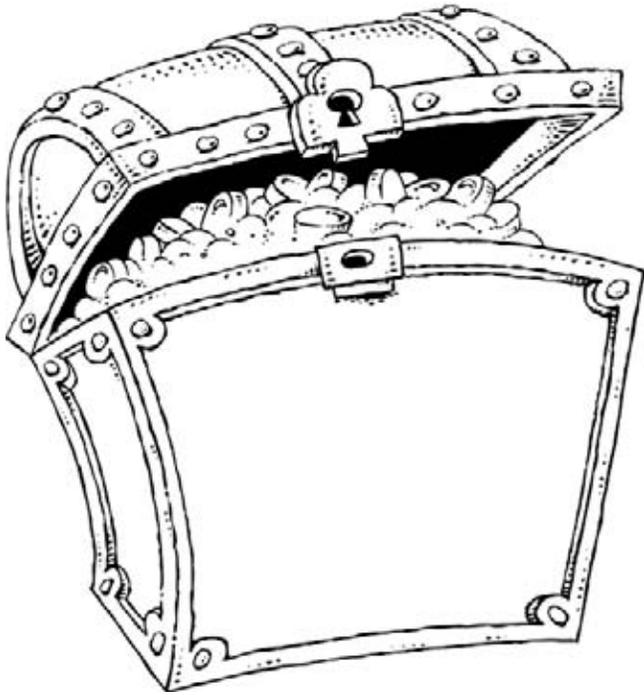
**Repeat** this process with:

- a woman to represent a teacher
- a man or woman to represent a server at a restaurant
- a child to represent one of their friends

**Ask** learners to share their treasure chests with their families to show what the boys and girls have learned about our church’s mission assignment. **Tell** children to try to use at least one way from the list that they can be a witness this week. **Distribute Parent Letters** and **encourage** the children to work on memorizing this week’s verse. **Tell** children that if they say the verse to their parents, they should ask their parents to sign the bottom of the sheet so the child can bring it back to class next week.

If time allows, **give** a notebook to each learner. **Encourage** children to decorate the notebooks to look like treasure maps. **Keep** the notebooks for use in the next session.





Dear Parent,

Thank you for sending your child to the first Acts 1:8 Challenge session. Each session your child will be learning about God's mission for Christians and churches. We want to know about the job God has given us to do and the way He helps us do it.

As we study, we will be digging through God's Word like treasure hunters trying to complete a map. Each session your child will study another part of this map by memorizing Scripture. This session's Bible verse is Acts 1:8, the basis for all we will be learning during the next few weeks. In today's session, the children searched to find clues to put together this verse. The boys and girls also have been talking about what the verse means. Girls and boys have been thinking about how to be witnesses and what God treasures most. In *The Acts 1:8 Challenge*, Nate Adams stated, "The church fulfills its role as it gathers worshipers from the peoples of the world as if it were collecting treasure to present to its beloved King."

Please encourage your child in two ways this week. Help him look for an opportunity to be a witness to someone else. Encourage him to write what he did and bring it back to the next session. Also help him practice the memory verse printed below. If he can say the whole verse by himself sometime during this week, then sign below and return the sheet for our next session.

Thank you again for participating with your child as we learn to be God's treasure hunters.

In Christ,  
Acts 1:8 Leaders

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"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" (Acts 1:8, HCSB).

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Parent Signature