



Unit 29 | Session 1

# JESUS GAVE HIS FOLLOWERS A MISSION

## Acts 1

### **CHRIST CONNECTION:**

Jesus left earth and returned to heaven, but He did not leave us alone. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us do God's work on earth while we wait for Jesus to come back and make everything new.

### **BIG PICTURE QUESTION:**

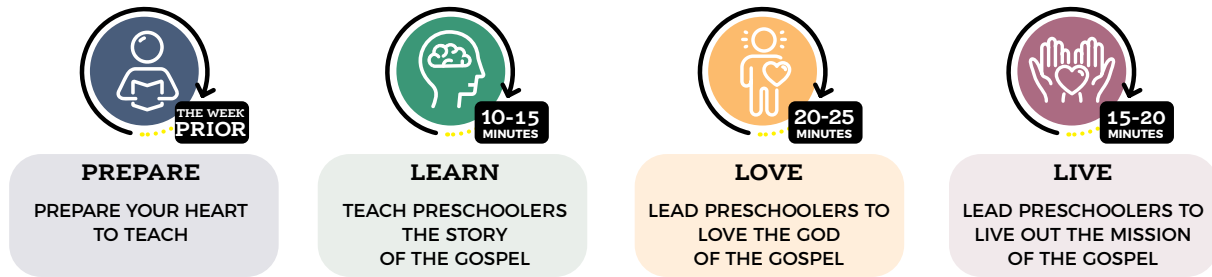
How do we know God wants us to know Him?  
We know God wants us to know Him because He shows Himself through the Bible.

### **KEY PASSAGE:**

John 17:3



IN ADVANCE TO TEACH THE SESSION



## LEADER Bible Study

Today’s passage is found in the first chapter of the book of Acts. Although Jesus’ time on earth was coming to an end, He promised to leave for His followers a special Helper and Guide. God fulfilled His promise to remain with us, and through the gift of the Holy Spirit, He also provided the power to accomplish the mission of His church.

What was Jesus’ overall mission for His church? Better yet, how were the apostles supposed to accomplish this feat in Christ’s absence?

Jesus’ departure meant great uncertainty for His people. He proclaimed the restoration of God’s kingdom, but His apostles could not seem to recognize His power at work. Though they requested a timeline for their troubles, the Lord directed their attention away from the passage of earthly time and instead toward the power of His Holy Spirit.

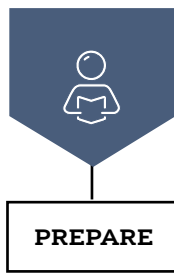
As He did with His early followers, the Lord has called us to be witnesses of His good news to the world. He may not give us the answer to every one of our questions, but He does give us the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim His good news with our words and actions. From Judea to Samaria, near and far, there is no place His power and purpose cannot reach. Knowing we lack the ability to do His will on our own, He provided

His Holy Spirit to aid us on this mission. Jesus even declared in John 16:7 that it is better that He leave us and grant us the Spirit’s power in His place.

As you lead preschoolers this week, consider the truth that the Holy Spirit has already provided us the strength needed to witness to the next generation of Christ followers. While we may not understand His timing or plans, we can trust in His ability to provide what is needed to do His will. Help your class see that the Holy Spirit empowers us to face life’s uncertainties and to live on mission for His kingdom, leading others to place their trust in the God who provides all we need.

### TERMS TO KNOW

**Disciple:** the Greek word *mathēteuō* means “to make a disciple; to teach, to instruct.” Jesus used this verb in Matthew 28:19.



IN ADVANCE TO TEACH THE SESSION

## GATHER Supplies

Keep these items on hand for each session: Allergy Alert, Bibles, construction paper, copy paper, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, glue sticks, glue, blocks, baby dolls, play dough, world map or globe, snack food, paper cups, and napkins.



### Welcome and worship with song

- “A New Creation” song
- Giant Timeline or Small Group Timeline

### Tell the Bible story

- Bible Story Picture Poster
- “Jesus Gave His Followers a Mission” video (optional)
- storytelling tips props (optional)
- camouflage hat or army helmet

### Practice the key passage

- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- “The Fruit (Galatians 5:22-23)” song

### Learn the big picture question

- Big Picture Question Poster

### Respond through song and prayer

- “You Will Be My Witnesses” song
- “Children of the Kingdom” song

### Travel to the ends of the earth

- timer (optional)

### Paint clouds

- plastic tablecloth
- smocks
- sponges cut into cloud shapes, 1 per child
- clothespins, 1 per child
- paper plates, 1 per one or two children
- blue paper, 1 per child
- washable white paint

### Disappear

- bed sheet or blanket

### Go on a mission

- small paper bags

### Spend time with friends

- puzzles
- preschool-friendly games

### Review

- Giant Timeline
- “The Fruit (Galatians 5:22-23)” song song

### Missions Moment

- “Life and Legacy of C.W. Pruitt” missions video



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

# LEARN the Bible Story

### 1 WELCOME AND WORSHIP WITH SONG

Greet preschoolers with a smile. As preschoolers arrive, sing an action song such as “A New Creation” to engage them and help them feel welcomed.

### 2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Put on a camouflage hat or an army helmet and act like a military commander. Tell preschoolers that today you’re going to talk about a very special mission.

**SAY** “Hello, friends! Do you know what kind of person wears this kind of hat? A commander in an army! A commander tells his troops where to go and what to do. That’s called giving them a mission. Today we will learn about someone who was not a commander, but He did give a very important mission—maybe the most important mission ever.”

Open your Bible to Acts 1. Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bold version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

### JESUS GAVE HIS FOLLOWERS A MISSION

“After Jesus rose from the dead, He spent time with His friends. He ate with them and gave them a very important mission. **Jesus’ friends were back in the city of Jerusalem. Jesus told His friends not to leave the city, but to wait. God was going to send the Holy Spirit.**

Jesus reminded the disciples about John the Baptist. John the Baptist baptized people with water. **Jesus said, “In just a few days, you will be baptized too—not with water, but with the Holy Spirit.”**

When Jesus and all His friends were together, His friends asked, “Lord, are You giving the kingdom back to Israel now?”

His friends still did not understand. God’s kingdom is so much bigger than Israel. **Jesus said, “That is not for you to know, but you will get power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. You will tell people about Me in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”** Jesus knew His friends could not do God’s work on their own. **The friends needed the Holy Spirit’s power so they could tell people all across the world about Jesus.**

**Then something amazing happened! Jesus’ friends saw Jesus go up to heaven! A cloud took Him out of their sight. As the disciples looked into the sky, two men in white clothes stood beside them. The men said, “Why**

### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Use a helium filled balloon:** Demonstrate letting go of a helium balloon inside the building. Explain that if you let it go outside, it would go all the way up until you couldn’t see it anymore. Show the balloon going up as you tell about how Jesus went up to heaven on a cloud.

**Roll a globe:** Use an inflatable globe to talk about the mission Jesus gives to His followers. Roll the ball to each child as you tell that God wants us to share about Him with Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

**are you staring up into the sky? Jesus has been taken into heaven. One day, He will come back again** in the same way.” ”

Christ Connection: Jesus left earth and returned to heaven, but He did not leave us alone. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us do God’s work on earth while we wait for Jesus to come back and make everything new.

### 3 PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

Place the key passage marker at Galatians 5:22-23. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Create motions for preschoolers to use as they say the key passage. Use the key passage song video for inspiration.

**SAY** “ Do you think that the Bible is talking about real fruit, like bananas and apples here? [Allow responses.] I don’t think so, either. Just like oranges come from an orange tree or strawberries come from a strawberry plant, the fruit of the Spirit comes from a person who has the Holy Spirit. We will learn more about the Holy Spirit during our next few times together. ”

Sing the key passage song “The Fruit (Galatians 5:22-23).”

### 4 LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

**SAY** “ Our big picture question and answer for today and our next few times together tells us about the Holy Spirit. Here is the question, **How does the Holy Spirit help Christians?** We’ll be learning this answer, **The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory.** Before Jesus went up into the clouds, He promised to send the Holy Spirit to His friends. Anyone who follows Jesus today also has received the Holy Spirit so that He can comfort us, show us our sin, and guide us. ”

### 5 RESPOND THROUGH SONG AND PRAYER

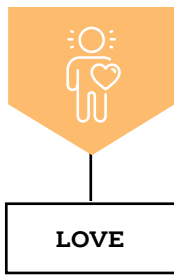
**SAY** “ Jesus left earth and returned to heaven, but He did not leave us alone. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us do God’s work on earth while we wait for Jesus to come back and make everything new. ”

Sing “You Will Be My Witnesses” as preschoolers move with the music. Prepare for prayer by singing “Children of the Kingdom.” You may also collect an offering.

**SAY** “ Jesus, thank You for promising to send the Holy Spirit. We are thankful that He lives with every person who follows You and that He comforts us, shows us our sin so that we can turn away from it, and guides us. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

# LOVE God because of what we learned

### 1 TRAVEL TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH



Place three blocks at different distances from a wall in the room. Demonstrate for preschoolers how to start at the wall, go to the first block, go back to the wall, go to the second block, and so on until you have traveled to and from all three blocks. Invite preschoolers to travel this course one at a time. You may choose to time children with a timer or pocket device.

**SAY** “The first block was close, the second one was a little bit farther, and the third one was far away. Before He disappeared in the clouds, Jesus said that His followers would tell people about Him in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Jerusalem was close to where they were, Judea and Samaria were a bit farther, and the ends of the earth was very far away. Jesus would send the Holy Spirit to help them take the good news about Jesus all over the world.”

### 2 PAINT CLOUDS

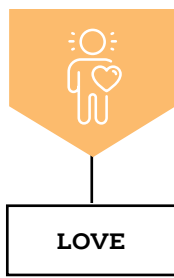
Prior to the session, cut sponges into circular shapes that can be used to paint clouds. Cover a table with a plastic tablecloth and assist preschoolers with putting smocks over their clothes. Provide each preschooler a sheet of blue construction paper. Attach a clothespin to a sponge for each preschooler and place a small paper plate with white paint on it between each pair of preschoolers. Demonstrate how to dip the sponge in the paint and place it on the paper to make clouds.

**SAY** “Great job painting clouds on your paper! Jesus’ friends saw a cloud take Jesus away to heaven. That must have been amazing to see! Jesus promised His friends the Holy Spirit would come and guide them to accomplish their mission to tell the whole world about Him.”

### 3 DISAPPEAR

Stand in the doorway to the classroom. Hold up a bed sheet or blanket in front of you so that the preschoolers cannot see you. Then drop the top of the sheet down and back up a few times so the preschoolers understand you are standing behind the sheet. Count to three, and then gently toss the sheet up in the air while you step to the side of the doorway. The sheet will fall to the ground and it will look like you have disappeared. Consider letting the children take turns pretending to disappear.

**SAY** “Did you think I disappeared? I was just pretending! The disciples had seen Jesus every day for years, and then in our story today, He just disappears! He was taken away by a cloud, which must have been amazing to see! He did not leave us alone though. He promised to send the Holy Spirit to comfort us, show us our sin, and guide us.”



## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

### 4 GO ON A MISSION

Explain to children that you are about to take them on a mission. Tell them their mission is to go and find something that tells us about God. Following your church's policies and procedures, take the preschoolers outside and encourage them to find something in nature that tells us something true about God. Give each child a small paper bag to hold the item she discovers. Guide preschoolers to look for things like flowers, rocks, and leaves. Be prepared to help preschoolers identify how an object of nature shows us God's creativity, wisdom, beauty, or power.

**SAY** “ Well done, friends, on accomplishing your mission! You found something God made that tells us about Him. But nature can only tell us a few things about God. Nothing we found outside can tell us that Jesus came, lived, died, and rose again so that we could be saved from sin. That’s why Jesus gave a mission to His followers, including us! We are to go and tell others the good news about Jesus. We have an amazing helper for this mission—the Holy Spirit. **How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory.** ”

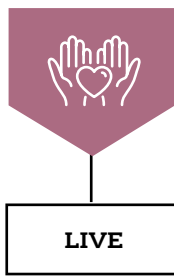
### 5 SPEND TIME WITH FRIENDS

Provide puzzles and games that are appropriate for preschool-aged children. Invite preschoolers to spend time with others in the room by having fun playing games and working puzzles together.

**SAY** “ After Jesus rose from the dead, He came and spent time with His friends, the disciples. They ate together, talked together, and maybe even did some fun things together like you have been doing today. Jesus is God, and He is also a person like you and me who enjoys spending time with His friends. While He loves His friends, He needed to go away so that He could send the Holy Spirit who comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us to worship God. ”

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### **LIVE** for God out of love

#### **1 REVIEW**

Point to the giant timeline as you review today's Bible story. Ask the following review questions.

1. What did you like about the Bible story? (Preschoolers' answers will vary.)
2. What was the mission Jesus gave His friends? (Jesus told His friends to go and tell the whole world about Him.)
3. Who was the Helper that Jesus promised to send to His followers? (the Holy Spirit)
4. What are some things you can tell other people about Jesus? (Preschoolers' answers will vary.)
5. Can you name one or two people in your life that you like to talk to about Jesus? (Preschoolers' answers will vary.)
6. **How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.**

**SAY** “ Jesus gave His friends a mission before He went to heaven. He said that they should tell everyone near and far about Him. He also promised to send the Holy Spirit who would send and guide them in their mission. Everyone who follows Jesus receives the Holy Spirit and has this same mission to tell others about Jesus. ”

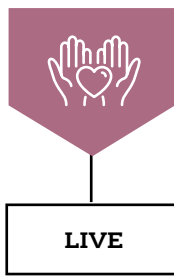
Sing the key passage song “The Fruit (Galatians 5:22-23).”

#### **2 PRAY**

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have. Pray for them.

**SAY** “ Jesus, You are God! You left us with a mission when You went to heaven, and You sent us the Holy Spirit to help us and guide us. Help us to follow this mission, amen. ”





## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### 3 MISSIONS MOMENT

Show the “Life and Legacy of C.W. Pruitt” missions video.

**SAY** “Cicero Washington (C.W.) Pruitt was a missionary in China for over 50 years. He encouraged and helped Lottie Moon, another missionary, in China. C.W. Pruitt started a school in China to train leaders for the churches in China. He stayed in China through hard times and during his old age.”

Pray, thanking God for C.W. and how he helped the Chinese people know about Jesus. Thank God for the school C.W. formed that continues to train leaders. Pray that missionaries today always have the strength and energy they need to continue in the difficult times.

### 4 FOLLOW THE KING'S INSTRUCTIONS



Play “Simon Says,” but instead of calling the person at the front Simon, call them the King. The King will give instructions to all the preschoolers, but the preschoolers should only perform the action if the King also said “The King says ...” before the instruction. If those words are not said, then the preschoolers should ignore the instructions. Every few minutes, give another preschooler a chance to be the King.

**SAY** “The disciples asked if Jesus was going to be king of Israel. But Jesus had something bigger in mind. He is not just the king of one nation or one group of people; He is King over the whole world—all of creation! King Jesus has given us a mission to tell others about Him, and we can obey this mission with the help of the Holy Spirit.”