



St Helen's  
Bishopsgate

# Acts

## Teaching material for 5-11's

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The king is building his kingdom.



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# The 'material' of Sunday school



The unfolding story of the Bible is revealed progressively through 66 books. These books were written by human authors who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. They were written with an agenda to a real audience. **Through these books, by His Spirit, God works.** He gives new life and discipled His people.

At Sunday school our desire is to teach through books of the Bible and allow our teaching to be directed by the Biblical author. We want to make the *main point* of our teaching the main point the author is teaching. We want the *aim* of our teaching to be the aim the author had. When we think about *how* we teach, we want to use the literary style, techniques, and content the Biblical author uses. In short, **we want to teach the Biblical author's point, for the Biblical author's purpose, using the Biblical author's practice.** The more clearly this is done, the more clearly the children will have heard the living God speak to them. As we strive to do this, we pray the fruit would be thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.

The team at St Helen's has worked hard studying some key books of the Bible. As we have done so we have endeavoured to write our material following the principles above.

## 5-11's material

The 5-11's material is presented as example talks. An example talk has several functions.

Firstly, it is a talk. This talk could be given verbatim, adapted, used for ideas, or ignored by the individual assigned to give the talk. For less experienced leaders they may wish to read verbatim the example talk, adding in props and visuals. For more experienced leaders they may wish to chop, change, and adapt the example talk as they see fit. For very experienced leaders they may wish to ignore the example talk and write their own, only looking at the example to see another voice on the passage.

Secondly, it is a commentary on the passage. For those not giving the talk the example helps them to understand the passage, how it can be taught, and areas of application. It will also indicate what the speaker might say so that everyone can align their group time with this.

Additionally, there is space for working. Use this to help you prepare for your group discussion and activity.

# Teaching program | Acts

## The king is building his kingdom

### Introduction to the Book of Acts

Acts is volume 2 of Luke's account of Jesus' life and work written for Theophilus. In the first verse of Acts, Luke explains that volume 1 was about all Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven. The book of Acts is about all that Jesus continued to do and teach as the risen and ascended King. As with Luke's gospel, he is writing to give Theophilus certainty that Jesus is still accomplishing the Old Testament promises as his kingdom is built. Now we see the ascended King Jesus actively growing the kingdom, through his Holy Spirit and the witness of his apostles, to the ends of the earth. This is just as promised in Luke and in the Old Testament.

**1:1-26: King Jesus lays out his plan to build his Kingdom.**

**2:1-8:3: King Jesus builds his kingdom in Jerusalem.**

2:1-4:2: King Jesus opens the doors to his Kingdom in Jerusalem as the Spirit is poured out and the apostles bear witness.

3:1-6:7: King Jesus builds his church, his new temple, despite opposition from the Jewish leaders. His plan is unstoppable.

6:8-8:3: King Jesus builds his kingdom even through the suffering of his servants.

**8:4-9:31: King Jesus builds his kingdom in Judea and Samaria.**

The gospel is making a new Israel.

**9:32-12:24: King Jesus begins to build his kingdom to the ends of the Earth.**

9:32-11:18: The first Gentiles are brought into the Kingdom

11:19-12:25: God's chosen people are now Jew **and** Gentile sharing in a new Exodus.

**12:25-16:5: King Jesus uses Paul to witness to the children of Israel (and then the Gentiles).**

12:25-14:28: Paul witnesses to the Jews in their synagogues but they thrust the word aside, so he turns to the gentiles and many believe.

15:1-16:5: At the Jerusalem council the apostles decide the Gentiles have no need to keep the law; instead, they will write to them concerning Christian conduct.

**16:6-19:20: King Jesus uses Paul to witness to idolatrous Gentiles.**

Many turn from ignorance and idols to worship the one true God.

**19:21-28:16: King Jesus uses Paul to witness to Kings.**

## Memory verse

“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

## Teaching plan

Week/ Talk	Passage	Title	Big idea
1	1	The mission	King Jesus is at work building his kingdom.
2	2	Jerusalem	King Jesus began his work by giving his Spirit.
3	3-5	Unstoppable	King Jesus' work is unstoppable.
4	6:8-8:3	Suffering	King Jesus is at work even through suffering.
5	8:4-40	Judea and Samaria	King Jesus rebuilds his kingdom in Judea and Samaria.
6	9:1-22	God's servant	King Jesus is at work transforming his enemies.
7	10	Ends of the earth	King Jesus is at work growing his kingdom to the ends of the earth.
8	11:19-30	Christians	King Jesus is at work making a whole new family for God.
9	13:1-14:23	Rejected	King Jesus is at work even when the good news is rejected.
10	16:16-40	Saved	King Jesus is at work saving people from darkness.
11	19:21-21:16	Staying safe	King Jesus is at work keeping people safe with his word.
12	21:17-23:11	Jerusalem part 2	King Jesus is at work on God's most important building project.
13	25-26	Kings	King Jesus is at work calling kings into his kingdom.
14	27-28	Shipwreck	King Jesus is still at work saving the world from death.



# The mission

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work building his kingdom.

[**Starter activity:** Get a leader to go behind a screen and do something random. Get the children to guess what the leader might be doing. Pull back the screen to see if they were right. Repeat.]

## Introduction

I wonder if you've ever thought, what's Jesus doing now? Close your eyes and imagine Jesus. Picture where he is right this second. What's he doing? [Take some of their ideas?] Is he alive up in heaven with his feet up watching the TV until he comes back? Maybe having a snooze? A well-earned rest. Has he got his binoculars out just watching what we're up to? Like human birdwatching? The truth is way more exciting than that and we don't have to guess, like we were guessing a moment ago. The answer is in the book of Acts!

## Point 1. King Jesus is at work building his kingdom...

Acts is book 2 in Dr Luke's two-part book series. Hear how he opens book 2. [Read Acts 1:1] In Luke last term we only learned about all Jesus began to do and teach. In Acts we're going to see what Jesus did next, all the way from heaven! We'll also see what he's still doing now. There will be lots of dramatic stories. There are miracles, dead people made alive, prison breaks, a shipwreck, and some people are even killed. Acts is a book full of action. We'll be hearing some of these dramatic stories over the next few months. But in today's story, from Acts chapter 1 we get to listen in on Jesus' masterplan.

To begin his book Luke takes us to the final moments of Jesus on earth with his best friends. His friends are confused. They think Jesus' masterplan must be to make God's Old Testament people, Israel, an important kingdom once again. Jesus' masterplan is much, much bigger than that though. [Bring in a screen that's set up with Acts 1:8 printed in big print, a world map and a close up map of Israel. You could also have some strings with pins pointing to the appropriate areas.] Here are Jesus' last words. His masterplan. [Read Acts 1v8. As you read point to the appropriate places on the map]

Jesus' masterplan is to build his kingdom, but it's not just going to include Israel and their capital city Jerusalem. His kingdom is going to spread to the ends of the earth. It will be full of people from every country. The disciples think Jesus is building a sandcastle when he's building Wembley stadium! [show pictures]. King Jesus is at work building his kingdom, but how is he going to do this mammoth building project?

## Point 2. ... as the good news spreads.

'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...' What a promise! The apostles, Jesus' best friends who saw everything he did and heard everything he said, would

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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receive power from God. Jesus will send his Holy Spirit to give them power. Not power of super strength or X-ray vision, but power to make them super bold to tell others the good news about Jesus. [Reread 1:8 with emphasis on second half.]

The power the Holy Spirit will bring is so that they can be witnesses to Jesus. [Right at this moment get a leader to cartwheel across the back of the room or some other impressive trick, so that some but not all the children see.] Did you guys see that? Hands up if you saw what just happened. Hands up if you missed it. Would someone who just saw it like to be a witness and tell us all what happened? [Get someone to stand up and tell everyone what they saw.] That's amazing. Thanks so much for telling us. <Child's name> was a witness. They saw something and spoke about it to people who didn't. This is what the apostles were to do. They saw and heard the good news that Jesus died and came to life with their own eyes and ears, and now Jesus' mission is for them to tell others who didn't see. As people hear and believe their message, they become part of Jesus' kingdom. King Jesus will build his kingdom as the good news spreads.

It will spread like a Mexican wave or like Chinese whispers- from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria to the ends of the earth. [You could demonstrate this with an actual Mexican wave or game of Chinese whispers.] The disciples are to begin the wave by telling everyone what they have seen and heard in Jerusalem and then it will spread through Judea and Samaria, to the ends of the earth. We're going to be looking out for this mission throughout the whole book of Acts.

## Conclusion

Jesus made this promise then suddenly clouds came down and he was taken up into heaven. He was gone, but the disciples have the promise of the Holy Spirit and they know the masterplan. They just need to wait for it to begin,

In his sequel Dr Luke wants us to know what Jesus is doing right now, in heaven. He wants us to know that Jesus definitely isn't dead, but he's also not just sitting up in heaven having a snooze, playing games on his phone or human-watching. Jesus is at work. He's at work carrying out his mission to take the good news to the ends of the earth. That's how King Jesus is building his Kingdom. We don't need to close our eyes and imagine what Jesus is doing, we know what he's doing. He's not relaxing on holiday. He's working. He's building his kingdom. He's sending out the good news and pouring out his Spirit. And in the last two thousand years he's not stopped. Yesterday when we were playing in the park and relaxing with our family, Jesus was working - even though it's the weekend! Today, the main thing on Jesus' to-do list is to build his kingdom. As we're reading Acts we can decide if we want to be part of Jesus' great kingdom building work.

## Pray

**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Jerusalem

Big Idea | King Jesus began his work by giving his Spirit

[**Starter activity:** Show pictures of some famous grand openings and get the children to guess what is being opened eg Disney world, the Olympic games.]

## Introduction

Do you know how the Olympic games begin? There's a grand ceremony with singing and dancing and flags waving. Then a flame is brought in to light a massive cauldron. As soon as the cauldron is lit the games have begun! Last week Jesus gave his disciples the plan for his mission to build his kingdom. Acts chapter 2 is like opening ceremony. The mission is launched not with singing and dancing but something even more dramatic. King Jesus began his work, by giving his Spirit! Nothing has ever been the same since. Let's see what happened on this opening day..

## Point 1. The Spirit is given

10 days had passed since Jesus was taken into heaven. It was the day of Pentecost and Jerusalem was full of crowds of people from all over the world. The disciples were hiding away in a room. Listen to what happened next. [Read 2:2-4] How strange! A strong wind whirling through the house [have sound of wind come over the sound system] and flames of fire separating and landing on each one of the disciples [moving fire on the screen]. It sounds a bit scary, but it showed that God was there with them, not on the top of an unreachable mountain like in the Old Testament. Now God, by his Holy Spirit, came and filled each one of the disciples. King Jesus began his work by giving his Spirit- just like he promised.

## Point 2. The disciples speak

This isn't like the light and sound show of the opening ceremony though. Now that the Holy Spirit lives in the disciples, the Holy Spirit gives the disciples power to speak about Jesus just like Jesus promised.

The disciples opened their mouths, but their voices were different. They were speaking in languages they had never learnt. [Get a few leaders who can speak different languages to say 'Jesus is Lord' in different language. Can the children understand what they're saying?]

The disciples go out into the street and tell the crowds in Jerusalem about Jesus in all these different languages. Everyone could understand as they spoke about Jesus being the King who died and came back to life. This was so strange that some of the people who heard the disciples thought that maybe they had been drinking too much wine.

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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Peter stood up and he began to do the mission Jesus gave them last week. With the help of the Holy Spirit he spoke in Jerusalem about Jesus. He said to them [get a leader to be Peter and read: "We're not drunk, it's only 9 in the morning! This is a sign Jesus is king and has begun his work by pouring out his Spirit. Now, let all Israel be certain of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."]

### Point 3. The kingdom is built

King Jesus has begun his work by giving his Spirit in Jerusalem just as he promised. The disciples are witnessing to him just like he promised. But is Jesus' kingdom going to grow? Yes! Look how the people listening reacted, can you all act it out for me? [Read 2:37] They believed Peter's message and wanted to join Jesus' kingdom. Peter told them what to do [peter reads 2:38].

That's exactly what happened. Listen to how many people came into Jesus' Kingdom on the very first day the doors were flung open. [Read 2:41] How many people came in? 3000! King Jesus was definitely at work building his kingdom that day.

### Conclusion

So today we've seen Jesus' masterplan has begun! [Point out the masterplan board.] The Spirit has been poured out [tick off the spirit part of the verse] the apostles are witnesses in Jerusalem [tick off that part of the verse] and the kingdom is being built as people repent and believe in him. It's like the doors to the kingdom have been flung wide open and people are rushing in. The Olympic cauldron has been lit!

But this is way bigger than the opening ceremony of the Olympics. Peter told the crowds that this day of Pentecost began a whole new age that is still carrying on today. We've had Roman times and Tudor times and Victorian Times [show pictures of these eras and more] since then, but really all those ages are Spirit times [stick Spirit times over the pictures] and we're still in Spirit times today. This is the time when King Jesus is at work in heaven, pouring out his Spirit so people can hear about Jesus and join his kingdom. These are exciting times to live in, way more exciting than the Olympics. We can be certain we live in these times, because Jesus poured out his Spirit and the gospel went out on that first Pentecost. We can be part of them as we turn to Jesus and believe in him.

### Pray

**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

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**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Materials**

# Unstoppable

Big Idea | King Jesus' work is unstoppable.

[This 'talk' is predominantly based around leaders acting out the story at a good pace, so will need a bit of rehearsal and preparation. Here are the leaders you will need:]

**Apostle Peter (could have more than one to represent John as well)**

**Jewish leader (could have more)**

Volunteer children or leaders to be Paralysed man, Angel and Prison Officer.

## Introduction

In Acts so far, we've seen that King Jesus has a mission to build his kingdom as the Spirit is poured out and people hear the good news about Jesus. Let's do a quick mission status update: [Get out the masterplan board] Spirit poured out: tick! Apostles to be witnesses in Jerusalem: tick! Things seem to be going well, but today we're going to see King Jesus has enemies. People who want to stop his plan. Are these enemies going to be able to stop God's plan? Let's find out...

## Round 1. King Jesus vs his enemies [3:1-4:4]

[Have a scoreboard ready to keep score.] [For the first part, act like you're introducing boxers in a boxing match with as much gusto as you can manage.]

So we have, representing Jesus...the apostles! [Have leader(s) being apostles on one side at the front. Lift their arms up like in a boxing match. Get children to cheer.]

On the other side, representing God's enemies...the Jewish leaders! [Point to leader(s) on the other side. Get the children to boo.]

[During the story get leaders to act out quickly as you read and to read the various bits of speech. Try and keep the pace up, a bit like a sports commentary! You don't want it to drag.]

King Jesus moves first. Peter and John meet a man who hasn't been able to worship God in the temple his whole life because he can't walk.

Peter says: "**In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!**" and the man leaps up and dances into the temple to worship God. [Opportunity for a leader to do some comedy dancing] Peter makes it clear this is King Jesus in action... "**Why do you stare at us as though we have made him walk? You killed Jesus, but God raised him from the dead. To this we are witnesses. Jesus' name has made this man strong.**" King Jesus is building his kingdom through the apostles as they witness to him.

The priests are greatly disturbed because the apostles are teaching about Jesus, so they grab Peter and John and, put them in jail until the next day. [Make a 'jail' for the apostles to be thrown into. Boo!]

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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The priests want to stop the disciples from speaking. But many have already heard the message and believe; so the number of men in the kingdom grows to about five thousand.

Who wins round 1? King Jesus. [Mark on the scoreboard] Can King Jesus be stopped? No!

### Round 2. 4:5-31

The next day all the most important Jewish leaders gather in the courtroom, like scary gladiators entering the ring. But Peter and John are not afraid. They take the opportunity to tell the whole court about Jesus.

The council don't know what to do, because they're worried about what the people might think of them [Priests point out to the children], so they just tell the disciples to stop speaking about Jesus. **"Stop speaking about Jesus!"**

But the disciples reply: **"We cannot help but speak about what we have seen and heard"**. The disciples go home and pray for boldness to be like Jesus and keep speaking about him. That's exactly what happens. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Who wins round 2? King Jesus! Can King Jesus be stopped? No!

### Round 3. 5:12-42

The apostles were still in the temple performing all kinds of signs in Jesus' name. Luke tells us that "more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women." [Children: Yay!]

BUT listen to what Luke says they do next..."**the high priest rose up [the Jewish leaders stands up] and all those who were with him, and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.** [Jewish leader put them back in prison. Children: Boo!]

But this time, Jesus goes even bigger. During the night God sends an angel from heaven to break open the prison doors and set them free to go back and teach in the temple. [Put on a halo and open the door or get a child volunteer to open the door.] And that's exactly what they do. [Apostle goes and stands in the pulpit or on a chair with open Bible. Children: Yay!]

In the morning...

Priest: **"Ok go and fetch them and bring them here"**  
[Pick a child to get them from prison]

**What's the matter? Go and get them.**

[Child points out there's no one there.]

**Well, where are they?**

[Children point to the apostle on a chair/in pulpit.]

Priest: **What?! Not again! How did you get there? Look, we told you not to teach in Jesus' name, but you've filled Jerusalem with your teaching!**

Apostle: **We told you before, we've got to obey God, not you. We have to tell people about Jesus.**

Priest [to the apostles]: **Ok you really really really need to not to talk about Jesus now. OK?**

Do you think that's going to stop the apostles? [No!] Listen to what Luke says happened next... **Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.**

Who wins round 3? King Jesus! Can King Jesus be stopped? No! King Jesus is the winner! [Get cast to sit down.]

King Jesus smashed through every hurdle his enemies put in his way. The Priests couldn't keep the apostles down. Whether they were put in front of councils or put in prison they kept teaching about Jesus more and more boldly. Jesus even opened prison doors to keep his word spreading.

Listen to Acts 6:7: **"So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith"** Even some of their own priests, Jesus' enemies, came into his Kingdom. That is how unstoppable King Jesus is!

## Conclusion

We need to know that this is true today. King Jesus' mission cannot be stopped. Even if Kings and Prime Ministers today make rules to stop people speaking about him, the good news about Jesus will keep spreading. Even if our teachers or friends want to stop us the good news about Jesus will keep spreading, all the way until his Kingdom is fully built. We can know that if we're part of Jesus' mission it will not fail! Let's give thanks that King Jesus really is unstoppable...

## Pray

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**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**



# Suffering

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work even through suffering.

## Introduction

Have you ever had a time when it felt like everything was going wrong? You had made a plan but something happens that spoils everything. We've got to a bit of Acts where that happens in a major way. It seems like King Jesus' plan for the whole world to hear about him has gone terribly wrong. A man called Stephen dies just for speaking about Jesus. We're going to travel back in time and hear what's been going on and if Jesus' plan really is all over.

[Have some time travel routine, e.g. Turn two times on way and two times the other. Then pat your head 5 times.] Are we there yet? Here comes someone. Excuse me, who are you? [Have a leader dressed up as a priest.]

**Priest:** I'm one of the priests from the temple.

Do you know anything about what's happened to Stephen?

## Point 1

### Stephen suffers

**Priest:** Stephen! I hated that Stephen! He was always talking about how our beautiful temple isn't important anymore. How Jesus is where we meet God now, how Jesus is more important even than Moses! That nobody carpenter from Nazareth, who died like a criminal! Impossible!

So, I stood up in front of the council and told the High Priest so. I told the High Priest the bad things Stephen was saying. Can you believe what happened next? That upstart Stephen started giving the High Priest a history lesson!! The High Priest who's been studying scripture all his life. Stephen told HIM that he hadn't understood God properly. That WE are responsible for getting in the way of God's plan by killing his messengers and even God's Son. Outrageous!

We were so angry we started grinding our teeth at him and yelling like animals. I thought it couldn't get any worse than to insult the high priest like that, but then Stephen said, "Look, I can see inside heaven and Jesus is sitting next to God on the throne". Well, that was the last straw; to say he could see God and see that criminal, Jesus, next to him in heaven as King. We could stand it no longer. We wanted him dead. So, we dragged him out and threw stones until he stopped saying such horrible things forever. That will put an end to these lies about Jesus spreading. Jesus is not the king, we are. [Priest storms off]

If you look at Stephen's story this way it does seem like everything has gone wrong. Doesn't it? The Christians at the time might have thought they had made the wrong choice. Maybe Jesus isn't the king? Maybe it isn't worth following him. So might we! But I think we need to see this story from another angle. We need to put on some special 'heaven's eye view glasses' [bring out some comedy glasses and put them on]. They're like virtual reality goggles only better! We need to have them on because Luke wants us to know it's not that everything is going wrong, in fact quite the opposite. King Jesus is building his kingdom through suffering. Let's see if we can ask someone else what they saw...

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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### Point 2

### Philip runs

[A leader dressed as Phillip rushes in from the back door carrying lots of bags as if he's escaping.]

**Philip:** My name's Phillip. I'm a friend of Stephen's. I can't talk for long. I'm on the run. I've got to get out of Jerusalem tonight. It's too dangerous. People are coming to put all of us Christians in prison. I was watching in the crowd last night. It was horrible to see the people yelling at him like that and so angry. You should have seen his face though. All the time he was glowing and so peaceful, like an angel. A real messenger of God. And I'm sure he really did see Jesus next to God in heaven. Stephen always told the truth you know, just like Jesus did in front of the chief priests the night he died.

Actually, come to think of it. A lot of what Stephen said and did and how the people treated him was just like Jesus. He had a trial where people told lies about him. He was killed by the priests. He told God that he was ready to give his life as he was dying. He even asked God to forgive his killers. All of that is just like when Jesus died on the cross. So... maybe this isn't God's plan going wrong. When Jesus died it wasn't God's plan going wrong, it was God's plan going just right. Jesus had to die to bring us into his kingdom. So maybe Stephen's death is a sign King Jesus is still building his kingdom through suffering. Anyway, I've really got to go now. I'm off to Samaria! Maybe see you there... [Philip runs off]

### Conclusion

With our powers of time travel we can find out what happened next... [Reverse time travel routine from earlier.] [Read Acts 8:1-4]

We thought that Jesus' plan was going wrong, but look what happened next! Stephen's death means Christians like Philip spread out from Jerusalem. Yes, it was really hard for all the Christians. They have to run away. But as they run away they tell everyone they meet in Judea and Samaria about King Jesus! It's because of Stephen dying that the gospel breaks out of Jerusalem, zone 1 of Jesus' plan and into Judea and Samaria, zone 2! [Could have the mission plan board and map again from talk 2 if it was used then and point to the areas on the map.] King Jesus' plan is right on track. King Jesus starts building his kingdom in Judea and Samaria, because Stephen suffered.

Life as a follower of Jesus won't be easy. We will have to suffer for him. But even when people suffer for speaking about Jesus, whether it's us or other people, we don't need to stop believing. King Jesus' plan hasn't gone wrong. King Jesus is building his kingdom through suffering just like he always has.

### Pray

Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

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**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Judea and Samaria

Big Idea | King Jesus rebuilds his kingdom in Judea & Samaria.

## Introduction

We need to start this morning by getting back in our time machine from last week, but this time we're going further back. Are you ready?! [Repeat whatever the time machine protocol was from the last talk.] We're going back past Stephen, past Jesus, all the way back to the time of the Kings of Israel we were looking at last year. God's special people live in the land of Israel. [Point to a large map of Israel.] They're meant to worship God and be a light to the nations and enjoy peace. But oh no! The kingdom has been torn in two by God because of King Solomon's disobedience. [Tear/cut the map in two between Samaria and Judea, but leave the two pieces pinned up for now.] Now there's Samaria in the North and Judea in the South. They're worshipping idols not the true God. [Stick lots of pictures of idols all over the land- more in Samaria.] They've turned away from God. They're no longer showing the countries around how good God is. So, God judges them, first Samaria [tear Samaria off the board, crumple up and throw away], then Judea [do the same with Judea]. Sadly, it seems like God's kingdom is finished in Israel.

Let's fast forward back to the book of Acts. Last week we saw followers of Jesus escaping Jerusalem because Stephen had been killed. They ran away to Judea and Samaria [pick up the bits of map from the floor]. These are the next places in Jesus' masterplan. [Go back to the master plan board.] What's going to happen when the gospel reaches God's broken-down Old Testament people? See if you can spot a familiar face from last week...

## Point 1 Philip in Samaria

[Read Acts 8:4-6.] [Phillip runs in through the door. If possible, have the same leader playing Philip as last week.] It's Phillip!

**Phillip:** Fancy seeing you guys again! I wondered if I'd see you up here in Samaria.

How has it been since you had to flee from Jerusalem?

**Phillip:** Well, you'd think it'd be terrifying and sad, but it's actually been amazing. I was nervous because the people here in Samaria rejected the true God a long time ago and turned to their idols and magic, but you wouldn't believe what's happened since I got here.

What's that?

**Phillip:** I've been telling people about Jesus – who wouldn't – and crowds of people stop and listen to me in the square. They used to all listen to this very dodgy guy, Simon, the magician [Have a poster for 'Simon the Magician' pinned up somewhere that Phillip could point to at this point]. They practically worshipped him because he did such amazing tricks. But since they've heard and seen the power of the true King, Jesus, no one is going to his shows anymore. Crowds of people come to hear little old me speak about Jesus instead. All of them are believing and

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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getting baptised.

That's amazing. Jesus' masterplan is continuing. You're being a witness to Jesus in Samaria just like he said and even people there are joining Jesus' kingdom. God hasn't given up on them. Jesus is rebuilding the kingdom in Samaria.

**Angel:** Phillip, rise and go towards the south, to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.

**Phillip:** Looks like Jesus wants me in Judea now- better dash! [Phillip runs round to the back of the room.]

### Point 1

#### Philip in Judea

Remember, Judea was the other part of God's people. They also had failed God. They hadn't shown the surrounding nations what God is like. What will the gospel do there? Let's take a peek – turn around and I'll read what happened straight out of Acts. [Get everyone to turn and face Philip at the back of the room.]

[Read 8:27-39. As this is read get Phillip and another actor (the Ethiopian eunuch) to mime it out in a slightly exaggerated fashion. Try to borrow a large bike or wheelbarrow to be the chariot.]

That's amazing- the gospel has gone out into Judea too, just like Jesus said. Even better, someone who was supposed to be welcomed into God's people from another country has been brought in- just like he was meant to. Jesus is rebuilding his kingdom in Judea and Samaria. [Pick up the crumpled map pieces and stick them back up.] Jesus' masterplan is right on track. [Tick off Judea and Samaria on the masterplan board.]

### Conclusion

This gives us such confidence in King Jesus and his masterplan. We can see that he's not going to give up on his plan. He didn't give up on his people from the Old Testament and he's not giving up on his plan for the gospel. If we believe in Jesus and join his kingdom we know we're in a plan that will be completed one day, so we need to stick with it. We can also see how powerful the good news about Jesus is. It's powerful to rebuild God's kingdom from the Old Testament and bring them back to God. Now with Judea and Samaria put right we can get ready for the rest of the world to be put right too!

### Pray

**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# The servant

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work transforming his enemies.

[Starter activity: Bring in leaders dressed up in disguises/costumes and the children have to guess who they are.]

## Introduction

Which leader had changed the most? Who has been transformed so much that it's hard to tell who they are? [Bring back the most disguised leader.] It's quite difficult to tell who this is! I can barely recognise them. He/she looks so different!

Today we are going to be learning about a man that God completely transformed. Not physically, like [leader's name]. He probably didn't look much different, but God changed his heart. God transformed him from being a man who hated Jesus to being a man who loved Jesus. God would use this man to spread the good news about Jesus.

## Point 1. The plan

But let's take a step back for a minute. Let's remember the beginning of Acts. Just before Jesus went up into heaven, Jesus made a promise to his disciples saying, "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." [Refer to the map and verse on the masterplan board.]

This was always God's plan – that the good news about Jesus would spread not just throughout Jerusalem, but in all Judea and Samaria and then all the way to the ends of the earth. So far in the book of Acts lots and lots of people in Jerusalem heard about Jesus, repented of their sin and believed in him. Then, after Stephen was killed, lots of people in Judea and Samaria heard about Jesus and some of them repented and believed in Him.

So far almost everyone who had been told about Jesus was Jewish. The Jews were God's people in the Old Testament. But God's plan was that people who weren't Jewish should hear the good news about Jesus too. People who are not Jewish are called Gentiles, probably most of us here are Gentiles. God wanted the Gentiles to hear the good news about Jesus too because God's plan was for people all over the world to hear about Jesus. But who would take the good news about Jesus to the Gentiles? Who would tell the Gentiles all about Jesus?

## Point 2. The person

The answer to this question is very surprising. The person God chose to take the good news about Jesus to the Gentiles was Saul. Saul! Saul was a very nasty man who lived in Jerusalem. He had been there when Stephen was stoned to death, and he had liked it. The last time we heard about Saul he was being very nasty to the Christians in Jerusalem [read Acts 8:3]. Now listen to

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## Visuals and props

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what it says at the beginning of Acts chapter 9 [\[read Acts 9:1-2\]](#).

So, Saul was planning to take a trip to a place called Damascus. Saul wanted to go to Damascus to find any disciples of Jesus so he could arrest them and bring them as prisoners to Jerusalem. This was Saul. This was the man God chose to take the good news to the Gentiles. How strange. Saul was against the good news of Jesus. So why would God choose him? Well, let's find out exactly what happened from Acts chapter 9 [\[read Acts 9:3-8\]](#). Wow. Saul met Jesus. Jesus, who is alive in heaven spoke to Saul. After this, Saul's life would never be the same again. But for now, he couldn't see, Jesus had made him blind. Let's hear what happened next [\[read Acts 9:10-15\]](#).

God told Ananias that he had chosen Saul to tell the Gentiles the good news about Jesus. So, Ananias went to meet Saul. He put his hands on Saul's eyes like God had told him to and suddenly Saul could see again. To show that he now believed in Jesus, Saul was baptised. Saul stayed in Damascus with the people who believed in Jesus. Instead of arresting them and dragging them off to prison, he lived with them for a few days. Then Saul started telling everyone about Jesus. Everyone who heard him was very surprised because they thought that Saul had come to arrest the disciples of Jesus. But instead, he was now telling everyone the good news about Jesus. The Jews hated that Saul had switched sides and was speaking about Jesus. After many days, the Jews tried to have him killed. But Saul heard about their plan, escaped from the city, and went back to Jerusalem.

At first, the Christians in Jerusalem feared Saul because he was the man who had been throwing them in prison. Slowly the Christians started to trust Saul and Saul set about preaching the good news about Jesus. Again, the Jews got together and plotted to kill Saul, but again he heard about it and escaped. The Christians sent Saul away from Jerusalem. Now Saul was going to be the man who would take the good news about Jesus to the Gentiles. King Jesus had totally transformed his enemy.

## Conclusion

How surprising! It was always God's plan that Gentiles like us would hear the good news about Jesus. But God decided to use Saul! King Jesus is so powerful he could change someone like Saul. Not on the outside like the leaders at the beginning, but on the inside deep in his heart. A man who hated Jesus became a man who loved Jesus and spoke about him everywhere. What a change, what a surprise! King Jesus must truly be alive and at work if he is transforming such dangerous enemies.

This shows us there is no one that God cannot use to keep the good news spreading, no one that he cannot bring to follow Jesus. We might think that some of the people that we know at school or neighbours on our street could never believe in Jesus. But this story teaches us that God can bring anyone to believe in Jesus, even someone like Saul who hated Jesus. King Jesus is powerful to complete his plans, to keep the good news spreading and we can be confident that not even the hardest heart can stop him, because King Jesus is transforming his enemies.

Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Ends of the earth

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work...growing his kingdom to the ends of the

[Starter activity: Using various categories divide the children in two, eg boys/girls, born in UK.]

## Introduction

We've seen that we can divide people into two groups in all kinds of ways. When Jesus came to earth everyone in the world could be split into two groups: Jewish people and Non Jewish people, or Gentiles. Let me tell you a bit about the Jewish people at that time. The Jewish people were also called Israelites in the Old Testament and they lived in the land of Israel. They were part of Abraham's family tree. They were always separate from the Gentiles. To show they were separate they ate different kinds of food. For example, a Jewish person would not eat any meat that came from a pig. Jewish people would keep away from people who ate that kind of food. Gentiles ate meat from a pig so Jewish people would not eat with them. They might not even go into their house. Jewish people and Gentile people were separate.

## Point 1. Introducing our characters

This man is called Cornelius. [Show a picture of Cornelius – he was a Roman centurion.] Cornelius was a Roman soldier. He was quite an important soldier who was in charge of 100 other soldiers. His group of soldiers came from Italy. Cornelius was not Jewish; he was a Gentile, just like most of us. Cornelius believed in God. He was a kind man. He helped people who did not have any money and he prayed to God. But according to the Jewish people, he was still in the wrong group. He was a Gentile.

And here is Peter. [Show picture – put it up a distance away from Cornelius.] He was one of Jesus' disciples. He was Jewish. Peter wanted to tell lots of people all about Jesus. But up until now he only told the good news about Jesus to Jewish people.

King Jesus wants to bring people from all nations into his Kingdom. We can see that from his masterplan [point to masterplan board]. He wants his disciples to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. So he needs to bring Peter and Cornelius together [point to the pictures far apart]. Let's see how he's going to do it.

## Point 2. Cornelius and Peter meet

One day, God sent an angel to Cornelius and the angel told Cornelius to send someone to get Peter. The angel told Cornelius where Peter was staying. God wanted Peter and Cornelius to meet each other. So, Cornelius did as God said and sent two servants and a soldier to go and get Peter. [Show a picture of a soldier and two men and walk them halfway from Cornelius towards Peter.] Meanwhile, Peter had a dream. King Jesus gave Peter the dream. This is what happened [Read Acts 10:11-15- while reading get four leaders to act out the dream by lowering a sheet filled with

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## Visuals and props

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toy reptiles and pigs and unclean birds. They could have angel costumes if you can find them!]

What a strange dream! Animals that Jews couldn't eat coming down in a sheet? Peter had the strange dream three times. But what did it mean? In the dream, Jesus was showing Peter that he could eat with people who were not Jewish. Before now Peter had never eaten food with someone who wasn't Jewish. God was showing Peter that now he could eat any food and eat with anyone.

Just then, the men from Cornelius came. [Move the men to meet Peter.] So Peter went with them back to Cornelius. [Move the men and Peter across towards Cornelius.] Peter was wondering what was happening. He was Jewish. He was going to see someone who was not Jewish. Because of his dream he knew he could eat with them, but why? What could it all mean?

Finally, Cornelius and Peter met each other. [Put Cornelius next to Peter.] King Jesus had done his work directing Peter and Cornelius to bring them together. Then suddenly Peter realised that God was teaching him an important lesson. [Read 10:34-35] God was showing Peter that he doesn't have favourites. God could accept Gentile people as well as Jewish people into his family. King Jesus is at work to bring all the nations into his kingdom, not just Jews.

So there was Peter standing in front of Cornelius. Peter finally understood what God wanted him to do. Peter told Cornelius, a Roman Gentile, the good news about Jesus. Listen to what he said [Read 10:43 – replace 'Him' with 'Jesus'.] Peter told Cornelius that anyone, no matter whether we are Jew or Gentile can have our sins forgiven by Jesus. All of us are sinners. All of us deserve God's punishment. But God sent Jesus to die on the cross for all of us. Cornelius heard this good news from Peter and he believed it was true. He and all his family put their trust in Jesus. Peter now realised that the good news about Jesus is for everyone.

## Conclusion

And we must realise this too. Anyone who believes in Jesus can belong to his kingdom. It doesn't matter where you come from. You can be Jewish or Gentile. English or French. You could have been born in India or born in America [use some examples from the starter activity]. It doesn't matter to God. What matters is that we believe the good news about Jesus, no matter where we are from. This is great news for us Gentiles! Since this day we're included and not left out of Jesus' kingdom. Ever since this day we can be sure that King Jesus is working out the last part of his masterplan. The disciples haven't got to the ends of the earth yet, but now a gentile has heard and believed we can be sure the path to the ends of the earth is open. [Put a dotted tick next to 'ends of the earth' on the masterplan.] King Jesus is expanding his kingdom to the ends of the earth and so we should want to take the good news about Jesus to people from the ends of the earth too!

## Pray

**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Christians

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work making a whole new family for God.

[Starter activity: Have the children guess which famous family you are thinking of eg Bluey's family, the Royal family, etc. Give them some family traits/markers as clues.]

## Introduction

You can tell someone belongs to a family by certain traits, often their name, perhaps what they enjoy or family traditions. [Give a personal example of what marks out your family.] For hundreds of years you could tell exactly who God's family was because they had family traits too. God's family were called the Israelites and later the Jews. They came from Abraham's family tree. They followed certain rules God gave them about what they should eat and what they should do to mark them apart. Their capital city was Jerusalem and they went there regularly to worship God. That's how you knew you were in God's family. [List out these traits visually on a board/screen. We'll take them down later.]

Last week we saw everything begin to change. A Gentile who was outside God's family, Cornelius, had heard the good news about Jesus and received the Holy Spirit. What does that mean for God's family? What are the family traits now? In today's true story from Acts, we're going to see everything is changing forever. King Jesus is making a whole new family for God.

## Point 1. The new family

We have two main places in our story from Acts today, so I'm going to divide you into two. [Get them to shuffle apart so there's a gap between the two groups.] [To the first group:] You guys over here are the church in Jerusalem. You're in the place where it all started back at Pentecost. You're Jews who have believed in Jesus, God's family.

[To the second group:] You guys over here are in Antioch. Antioch was a massive city outside the promised land. A few Jews live here but it's never belonged to God's family [show on map]. However, some people have come to you from Cyprus and started to tell you Gentiles about Jesus over here in Antioch. Amazingly many of you have believed!

This causes quite a commotion amongst the church in Jerusalem. This is the first time people outside the Promised Land who aren't Jews seem to be joining God's family. They're not sure this is right. Are things changing too much? Barnabas is sent to check it out, like a church inspector. [Pick someone to be Barnabas to head over to Antioch.]

Let's read what happened when he got there. [Read 11:23-24] [Get Barnabas to act like he's encouraging them at the right moment in the reading.] Barnabas, the church inspector, finds that God has been kind enough to make Gentiles part of God's family. They are a real church full of Gentiles and the church is growing bigger and bigger every day. So, Barnabas fetches Saul from Tarsus. Remember him? Mr Persecutor turned Apostle! [Have a leader ready to be Saul and get

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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[Barnabas to fetch him over to Antioch.](#)] Barnabas brings Saul over to Antioch so together they can teach them more about Jesus and help them to grow.

King Jesus is at work making a whole new family for God. So, what are the family traits of God's people now? Do we all get ginger hair or magical gifts? Do we learn a new national anthem? Do we make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem or eat turkey at Christmas? [\[You could choose different family traits from the beginning.\]](#) Well, for a start we've seen that it doesn't matter if you're in Jerusalem or Antioch or where you are in the world. [\[Cross out 'Capital city: Jerusalem' from your list earlier.\]](#) In fact, Antioch is going to be the new base from which the gospel is going to go out to the world.

It doesn't matter if you're Jew or a Gentile. [\[Cross out Israelite/Jew.\]](#) Now God's family have their own new name. [\[Read 11:26.\]](#) They're not Jews and Gentiles anymore, they're Christians. God's family name is Christian. [\[Add 'Christian' to the list.\]](#)

Christian, means 'little Christ', which is a great name for God's family. We've seen in Antioch that God's family are simply people who have truly believed the good news about Jesus Christ and turned to follow him. [\[Add 'Believe and Follow King Jesus' to the new list.\]](#)

And in Acts we can see God's new family, Christians, living out one more family trait, which is very like being a little Christ: love for one another. [\[Add 'Love one another' to the new list.\]](#) About that time, the church in Antioch heard there was going to be no food in the whole of Jerusalem very soon. Everyone, including their new brothers and sisters in God's family, were going to starve. [\[Get 'Jerusalem' side of the room to look hungry.\]](#) So, the mostly Gentile church in Antioch, decided to give whatever they could to help the mostly Jewish church in Jerusalem have enough to eat. [\[Have a bulging bag ready for Barnabas and Saul to carry over to Jerusalem.\]](#) They'd never met them before, they were different in so many ways, but they were part of God's family together, so they loved them and helped them with what they needed.

## Conclusion

King Jesus is at work making a whole new family of God- Christians- who are joined together and love one another simply because they follow Christ. If we follow Jesus that's our family name too. We're Christians! It's the most important thing about who you are. You are part of God's family. You bear the family traits of trust in Jesus and love for other Christians, and we try and do so more every day.

## Pray

Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:

Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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Materials:

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Rejected

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work even when the good news is rejected.

## Introduction

I've got some gifts here. I want you to tell me whether you would keep or reject them. [Have some small boxes wrapped in wrapping paper with tags on them. The tags have names of gifts; some good, some not so good e.g. holiday to Disney world, lifetime supply of donuts, washing my car, my half-chewed chewing gum etc. Get volunteers to come up and read the gifts and then everyone votes on whether to keep or reject the gift. Put the rejected ones in the bin.] Here is one more gift. The greatest gift. The gift of the good news of Jesus.

As the apostles were witnessing about Jesus they were bringing this gift to people. Lots of people had received the gift gladly. [Put the gift in the 'keep' pile.] Even Saul- remember him? Saul used to hate Jesus, but Jesus totally changed him. Jesus even gave him a special mission under a new name. Here it is: [add new page to mission board] "Paul is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and Kings and the Children of Israel". Paul's mission is what the rest of the book of Acts is about! He is going to have some epic gospel adventures as he offers Jesus' gift to gentiles, Jews and even Kings. But will people keep or reject this gift? Let's find out...

## Point 1.

### Paul takes the gift to the children of Israel

Paul set out on a mammoth journey to bring this gift to the world. [Put on a big rucksack and pop the gift inside.] Everywhere he travelled he went to the synagogue, where the Jews would meet, and he brought them the gift of the good news. After all, they had been promised this gift for many years, ever since Abraham. It's only fair they receive the gift first. He went and took the good news to the Jews in Cyprus, Antioch, Iconium and Lystra. [As you mention each place point it out on the map.] Let's zoom in on Antioch. In Antioch, Paul again went to the synagogue and told them about Jesus. Many people believed and were desperate to hear more next week.

The next week, almost the whole city gathered outside the door! Imagine if everyone living in the city of London turned up at St Helen's next week desperate to be in church, not because we were giving away free donuts or holidays to Disney world, but just so they could hear something about Jesus. These people really know the gift of Jesus is good! But look what happened next. [Read 13:44] There are some Jews who don't want the gift and they don't want anyone else to have it.

[Leader jumps up angrily and grabs the gift out of your hand and shouts, "You can't believe this gift is real. Jesus was no one special. Only idiots would say he can save us from our sin" Leader then throws the gift box in the reject bin.] What?! These are the people who were supposed to be waiting for the gift. This is what Paul says, [read 13:46-47]. Paul knew this would happen. It's just what God said. The Jews have rejected the gift, so he will take it to the Gentiles – the non-Jews.

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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### Point 2.

## Paul takes the gift to the Gentiles

Now when the Gentiles heard Paul say this they rejoiced! [Pull some party poppers?] Many believed and the gift of the good news about Jesus spread to many more people. The Jews rejecting the good news won't stop King Jesus gathering people for his kingdom. Even though the good news was rejected by them it will be accepted by others.

*(If time allows include: Paul kept holding out the good news about Jesus to Jews and Gentiles as he travelled to Iconium and Lystra. [You could walk around the group as you say this and hand out gospels from your backpack.] But Jews from Antioch followed them around trying to stop them. They tried to get other people to reject them too. [Get the leader from earlier to go round trying to take the gospels back and throwing them in the bin.] In Lystra these Jews even got people to throw stones at them until everyone thought Paul was dead. But King Jesus was still at work. Paul got back up again, spoke about Jesus in more places and the kingdom grew. King Jesus is at work... even when the good news is rejected.)*

## Conclusion

We don't need to worry that many Jews in Acts put the gift of the good news in the reject bin. Just because they did and they tried to make others do the same, it doesn't mean we should too. When they rejected the gift of the good news, they missed out on all the promises. They missed out on being saved from their sin. Now Gentiles like us get to enjoy those special gifts, because that was King Jesus' plan. You can be sure it's a gift worth having!

Today, there are many Jews who still reject the good news. Maybe you have a friend who's a Jew, or there's one in your class, or on your street. The gift was meant for them. But they've put it in the reject bin. Does that mean the good news is not good or true? No! God said they would do this. They have missed out on being saved from their sin. Wonderfully the gift has come to us. We can enjoy salvation from our sin.

## Pray

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**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Saved

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work saving people from darkness.

## Introduction

[During the story telling leaders could create the sound effects from a 'sound effects' table.]

[Come on wearing a blindfold and make some comedy mistakes. You could welcome everyone facing the wrong way or stumble over chairs on the way up.] Imagine living your whole life in the dark. Cooking, crossing the road, going on cliff-top walks, even making a cup of tea. Your life would be in danger every day!

On his second big gospel adventure, Jesus sends Paul further away than he's been before. He tells him to go all the way to Macedonia [show on map]. Here they are living in the dark. Not physical darkness like wearing a blindfold, but spiritual darkness. They don't know anything about the one, true God, so instead they worship made-up gods and they love magic and fortune telling. [Could have these things listed on a blanket or blindfold and put it on a volunteer to visually illustrate.] This means they're heading for big trouble with God. They desperately need saving from their darkness, but is Paul going to be able to help them?

## Point 1. The Philippian jailer

We're going to zoom in on one particular man living in the dark that Paul met on this second gospel adventure in a town called Philippi [show on map]. Let's imagine ourselves in his shoes. [Put on a Roman jailer costume.] He's a jailer working for the Romans, and he worships the emperor Caesar, just like everyone else. He doesn't know the true God, so he's living in the dark and he doesn't even know it.

You're on your way to work one day when you hear a local slave girl calling out, [have a leader call out: "These men are servants of God who are telling you the way to be saved."] This poor girl has an evil spirit living inside her, but she tells the future, so you turn and see she's pointing at two ordinary looking men. You've heard their names are Paul and Silas and they've been talking about a dead man called Jesus.

All of a sudden, the one called Paul turns and tells the evil spirit to come out in the name of Jesus. At once the girl is free- the evil spirit is gone. She's been saved! Maybe Jesus is alive and can save people after all, but *you* don't need saving. You've got a good job as a jailer and now you're late – so you rush off to work! [Run around the group and arrive in 'jail'.]

After a long day's work, there are angry shouts and knocking at the door [get someone to knock on the door]. You open it and see the whole town at the door and with them Paul and Silas. They look very different now. They've been badly beaten up. People are shouting that this Jesus they are talking about is against Roman beliefs, so they need to be locked up in your prison. You worship the Roman king, Caesar, so you gladly put Paul and Silas in the darkest cell, with their feet tied up.

But in the middle of night, you're woken by a sound. Is that singing? Paul and Silas are joyfully

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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singing about Jesus! [Get some leaders to sing or play some music.] Why would they do that in prison? Then another sound, rocks falling. The ground is shaking. It's an earthquake! [Get the children to move like it's an earthquake. Leaders shake rocks] Jail bars are clanging to the ground [Leaders drop cutlery]. Oh no! The prisoners! If they get out you're done for. You'll be in so much trouble with your Roman bosses. You start to panic and race down the corridor [run around the group again] and see the jail doors open – it's not worth living if they've escaped. But before you can draw your sword, there's a shout... 'Don't hurt yourself. We're here!' There in Paul and Silas' cell are all the prisoners gathered together. You're saved! Saved from the punishment of your Roman bosses. Saved like Paul and Silas from their prison cell. Saved like the girl with the evil spirit.

Then you remember the words of the slave girl... 'These men are servants of God who are telling you the way to be saved.' Suddenly, you realise. You may be saved from your bosses but you're still in danger with God. So you ask, the most important question anyone can ask in their whole life, 'What must I do to be saved?' [Get the children to say it together.] Paul replies, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household'.

This is what King Jesus does. He saves people from darkness. You bring Paul and Silas home so you can hear more about the good news of Jesus. You and your whole family believe and are baptised and are saved for ever.

## Conclusion

King Jesus was at work saving many other people like the jailer from darkness all through Paul's second gospel adventure. In Thessalonica, Athens and Corinth [show route on map], people turned away from following their made-up gods and magic and were saved by Jesus.

As we look around us on the street and in our classrooms, we will see lots of people in darkness who need saving, just like the people in Philippi. People who are Muslim or Hindu or Buddhist or atheist and don't worship the one true God. We might think they could never know Jesus, but King Jesus is at work saving people from darkness. He did it in Acts and he's doing it today. Muslims and Hindus and Buddhists and atheists all around the world are hearing the good news about Jesus and believing in him. They are moving from darkness to light. They are coming to know the one, true God. They are being saved. And until he comes back, Jesus will keep on saving people who are in the dark.

## Pray

**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Staying safe

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work keeping people safe with his word.

Starter activity:

- **Stay Safe:** Have an assortment of safety /equipment available. Give a scenario and someone has to come up and demonstrate how to be safe in that scenario using the equipment/dressing up. This could also be played as a race in teams.
- **Spot the Dangers:** Put a picture on the screen with lots of dangerous situations (google 'spot the dangers' to find these) They have to spot the dangers and say how they would stay safe.

## Introduction

Do you face any of these dangers day to day? Did you know that as Christians we face danger every day? We don't need to be scared though, because in this next section of Acts Luke shows us what that danger is and how to keep ourselves safe.

## Point 1. Danger!

Things have been pretty dangerous for Peter, John, Paul and other Christians already in Acts, but in these last chapters, we're going to see the danger-o-meter go through the roof. [\[Have a danger-o-meter.\]](#) In Ephesus there's a riot in the city. The streets are full of angry people shouting in the streets because they think their made-up god Artemis is greater than Jesus. They don't want people to follow Jesus and they're angry about it. It seems pretty dangerous. [\[Move the danger-o-meter up.\]](#)

To add to the danger for the Christians in Acts, Paul, who's been helping them, is leaving them for good. Remember Paul is on a special mission given by Jesus. [\[Read Acts 9:15 from masterplan board.\]](#) Paul knows where he needs to go to complete it: Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there," he said, "I must visit Rome also." But this meant he's leaving the churches behind. [\[Move the danger-o-meter up.\]](#)

And going to Rome will be a dangerous journey. [\[Move the danger-o-meter up.\]](#) He doesn't expect to come back, so he goes on a farewell tour. He wants to revisit the churches he's started [\[show on map\]](#). He knows it will be hard when he's gone, so he wants to encourage them not to give up. As Paul sails past Ephesus on his boat, he hops off to make a special stop. He wants to meet with the leaders of the church there where the riot happened. So as they stand on the beach he tells them everything they need to stay safe. [\[Read 20:29-32\]](#) Let's play spot the danger again. Can you spot the danger Christians are in and how to stay safe? [\[Take answers\]](#)

The biggest danger is not being thrown in jail or beaten up. The biggest danger is wolves! [\[If you can get a wolf costume, someone could sneak in dressed up as a wolf and sit amongst the children\]](#). Paul isn't talking about actual wolves (we don't see too many of those around London).

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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Paul is talking about people. These people distort and twist the truth. Perhaps they say that Jesus doesn't really want his people to be holy. Or maybe they twist what those who are faithful do and say. And they do this so that others would follow them. The wolves want to be shepherds. But you know what happens when a wolf becomes a shepherd? They devour the flock. These wolves are very dangerous. [\[Move the danger-o-meter to the top.\]](#) And Paul is no longer going to be around to protect the Ephesian church from them. So, how will they stay safe?

### Point 2. Safety!

Does Paul leave them a life jacket to be safe from these wolves? [\[Put on life jacket.\]](#) How about a hard hat/helmet? [\[Put on a hard hat/helmet.\]](#) No! Paul doesn't leave them with a parting gift of safety gear! Paul leaves them with a much more wonderful parting gift, a gift that Jesus gave him to pass on... the word of God's grace. [\[Take off the other safety equipment and hold up the Bible.\]](#) The word of God's grace. This is the good news about Jesus and all he's done for us which we find in our Bibles. [\[Hold on tight to the Bible.\]](#) This is what will keep them safe. If the leaders of the Ephesian church hold onto the Bible, it will help guard them against fierce wolves. It will tell them the truth about Jesus, so that they and their flock don't fall for wolfy lies.

And it does the same for us today! If we don't want to be eaten by fierce wolves, make sure your Sunday school leaders are reading their Bibles [\[hold on tight to the Bible\]](#); make sure your parents are reading their Bibles; make sure you are reading your Bible. It will tell us the truth about Jesus so that we don't fall for wolfy lies.

When the Sunday school leaders are teaching you from the Bible. We don't want to be running around or doodling or day dreaming. [\[Hold on tight to the Bible.\]](#) That's not helping protect us from danger! Listening to the good news about Jesus in the Bible will keep you safe from fierce wolves. So when we listen to the talk and when we discuss what we've heard in our groups, let's listen up, because King Jesus is working to keep us safe with the gospel.

At home, when your parents are trying to read the Bible with you- they're keeping you safe. [\[Hold on tight to the Bible.\]](#) Family Bible time is even more important than holding your hand by the edge of the road or teaching you how to ride your bike safely. Your parents are keeping you safe from fierce wolves as they remind you of the gospel. So don't get annoyed at Bible time because you think it's boring and want to go and play. Listen up! It's keeping you safe.

We need to hold on to the word of his grace. [\[Hold on tight to the Bible.\]](#) Don't forget all the good things we've been given because Jesus died for us. Don't stop reading about it in God's word on your own. Knowing the gospel more and more is keeping you safe!

### Pray

**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Jerusalem part 2

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work on God's most important building project.

## Introduction

Look at these pictures of some famous building projects. Which do you think are the most important buildings? Which would you keep? Which would you destroy? [Get the children to vote on which to put into a 'keep' column and which to put in a 'destroy' column.]

Throughout the book of Acts we've been seeing King Jesus at work building a new kingdom. Not a kingdom made of bricks and stone, but a kingdom filled with people who follow him. This is the most important building project on earth. [While you say the next bit, build up a Lego structure with pictures on big Lego.] We've seen Jesus build his kingdom first, among Jews in Jerusalem [put in a 'Pentecost brick'] and then in Judea and Samaria [put in a Phillip and Ethiopian brick]. The good news started to go to the ends of the earth with Cornelius [put in a Cornelius brick] and then through Paul [put in Paul brick] to countries further away [put in a Philippian jailer brick] Paul has had three gospel adventures, travelling far and wide to spread the good news and grow Jesus' kingdom. Now he is ready to take the gospel to the most important city on earth, Rome. From there the gospel really can go to the ends of the earth. But first, Paul wants to visit Jerusalem one last time to say goodbye to the first church.

## Point 1. Drama in Jerusalem

When Paul gets to Jerusalem, we see that while Jesus' kingdom has been growing in number, so have the Jews who hate Jesus' building project! You see, in Jerusalem there is another building, which they think is God's most important building project. Do you know what it is? The temple.

[Prepare the children to be the crowd in the story. Whenever you say 'shouting' they have to shout angrily and wave their arms. They have to stop on your signal. Practice this like a game a few times before you begin.]

When Paul arrives in Jerusalem he goes to the Jewish temple to purify himself and some other people according to the Old Testament Law. He does it to show his respect for the temple. But some Jews from Asia spot him and think the worst. They grab hold of Paul and start calling out in the middle of the temple... [Get a leader to stand up and shout Acts 21:28.]

The Jews think that Paul is teaching people against the temple. They think he has spoiled their temple by bringing some Gentile Christians inside. Paul hasn't actually done this, but no one will listen to him. The city of Jerusalem goes crazy...people are running in the streets shouting. They drag Paul from the temple and slam the door behind him. They are shouting and trying to kill

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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Paul with their bare hands when Roman soldiers run round the corner. The soldiers arrest Paul and tie him up with chains. The crowds are so angry and shouting so loudly the soldiers have to carry Paul above their heads to stop him being killed. The crowds just keep shouting, 'Away with him!' [Get the children to join in.]

Just like they wanted to kill King Jesus, the Jews in Jerusalem want to kill his messenger, Paul. When Paul starts talking about how Jesus told him to go and take the good news to Gentiles they shout even louder, throw off their cloaks and throw dust in the air like mad people... "Rid the earth of him! He's not fit to live!" [Get the children to join in.] After this, the Romans take Paul away into the Barracks and keep him under guard until they can find out why the Jews are so angry and figure out what to do with him.

[Brilliant acting. Now you can go back to being yourselves.]

Isn't it horrible? The Jews in Jerusalem hate King Jesus' new kingdom. They hate that gentiles can be a part of it. They want to stop the building work by stopping the king's witnesses. They want to keep their old temple [put a picture of the temple in the 'keep' column from earlier] and destroy King Jesus' new kingdom [put a picture of the church in the 'destroy' column].

But King Jesus is at work on God's most important building project, and nothing can stop him. Jesus himself visits Paul in prison in the night and says... "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."

## Conclusion

In the end the temple was destroyed [move temple to 'destroy' column], but Jesus' kingdom is still growing around the world today [move church into the 'keep' column]. Luke wants us to be sure of God's most important building project. He wants us to not waste our time on other projects, but give our time and effort and money and prayers to help Jesus' kingdom grow. Many people will be like the Jews and think they know what God's most important project is. They might say it's to stop poverty, or save the climate, or have global peace. And they may get angry if we disagree. But we can know that Jesus' kingdom is God's most important building project. It's a project that's still happening as King Jesus' witnesses go to the ends of the earth. It's a project that will last into eternity. And it's a project we can be involved with as well.

## Pray

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**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Kings

Big Idea | King Jesus is at work calling kings into his kingdom.

Starter activity:

- 'Play your cards right' with powerful people. The children have to say whether they think the next person is more powerful or less powerful. Finish by asking where Jesus fits in the line.

## Introduction

[Have three increasingly special chairs set up in a row at the front for later.]

Imagine yourself standing before King Charles III. "Um... Your majesty... you need to follow King Jesus" Can you picture yourself doing that? It might feel awkward. He has all he needs and more: fancy houses, pets, the finest food every day, servants. Why would he need to follow Jesus? He's also busy doing important stuff. He's making big decisions about the country. He's got more important things to think about. Surely, the most powerful people in this world don't need Jesus? The King doesn't need a king.

Today, we're going to see Paul doing just this in the next step of his special mission. [Read 9:15 from the masterplan board.] Kings! King Jesus is at work calling even the most powerful kings into his kingdom. He does it through his servant Paul.

## Point 1. Paul witnesses to kings

[Get some children to volunteer to be Lysias, Felix and Paul. Give Felix grander clothing than Lysias and have them sit in their equivalent chairs. Act out the following.]

The Jewish leaders from last week still want to kill Paul, so they make a secret plan. They plan to jump out and kill him on his journey to see the Roman judge, Lysias. [Have Lysias sit on his chair.] Paul's nephew overhears their plan and lets Lysias know. Lysias does not want Paul to die, so he rushes Paul undercover of night on horseback, to the governor, Felix. He wants Felix to decide the case. [Have Felix sit on his chair.]

Paul is now standing before the governor. He is a more powerful man than Lysias. He's in charge of all Judea. Paul is there to defend himself, but he takes the opportunity to witness to Felix. He speaks about Jesus. You see, King Jesus calls even governors into his kingdom.

Two years go by with no decision about whether Paul should be set free. A man called Festus becomes governor in Felix's place. [Get another child volunteer to swap clothes with Felix and sit down on the chair.] One day Festus has a visitor. [Have a fanfare of music and a leader enter dressed in even more elaborate king's clothing and process forward to sit in the grandest chair.]

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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King Agrippa. King Agrippa wants to see Paul.

Paul is now standing before the King, the most powerful man in the region. Paul is again there to defend himself, but as he tells his story he takes the opportunity to be a witness to the King. Let's listen in to how he finishes...

[Dramatise 26:22-29 by having your volunteers read out the conversation in parts]

Can you believe how bold Paul is? Paul knows that even the great King Agrippa has a King. King Agrippa needs to recognise that Jesus is his king. King Jesus is calling even Kings into his kingdom.

[Get everyone to sit down.]

Agrippa decides Paul could be set free, but Paul has asked to be put on trial before the greatest king in the world, the Emperor Caesar [show picture]. He rules in Rome. Paul knows that Jesus is king even over Caesar, and even he needs to hear the gospel, so that's where he's trying to get himself. That's where Jesus is directing him. King Jesus is calling even the greatest Kings into his kingdom.

## Conclusion

If we are Christians this means we can be sure we're part of the biggest, most powerful kingdom there is. If even King Charles and the prime minister and the presidents of China and the USA and the emperor of the Roman Empire need to bow before Jesus, then surely we should want to bow the knee to Jesus too. Jesus is the king over all the kings. His kingdom is the greatest.

Kings on earth may have palaces and pets and fancy food, but in Jesus' kingdom you have your sin forgiven and a place in the new creation. Kings on earth may know about politics, but in Jesus' kingdom you know God's plan for the whole world! Kings on earth have some power, but Jesus has all the power and he uses it for us his people.

We don't need to trust in any other leader or king, when we know the greatest king of all, King Jesus. King Jesus calls even kings into his kingdom, so why would you want to be anywhere else?

## Pray

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**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**

# Shipwreck

Big Idea | King Jesus is still at work saving the world from death.

## Introduction

I wonder if you've ever thought, 'Do I really need to tell people about Jesus?'. Why does the world need to hear about Jesus when there's way more exciting stuff going on; Taylor Swift concerts, Euro 2024, the Olympics!

We've been on an epic journey through the book of Acts this term. Today, we reach the end of the book of Acts and Paul finally reaches Rome. From there the good news really can reach the ends of the earth. You'd think God would make the journey plain sailing, right? Wrong! God uses this very dramatic journey to Rome, to teach us why the world really needs the good news about Jesus, even today.

## Point 1. Hope is lost

So, I would like to welcome you on board this Alexandrian ship bound for Rome [show picture. You could rearrange the chairs into a ship formation.] The emergency exits are...anywhere over the edge of the boat... We are setting out from the town of Myra with 276 people on board, including Paul, with his friends Luke the Doctor and Aristarchus [Leaders Paul, Luke and Aristarchus wave.]

[You could get a leader to be the captain of the ship and act out steering the boat from the front.]

As soon as we set sail it's clear that all is not well. The wind is against us [children do sound effects]. We have to go the long way round Cyprus, because the wind is so strong. Eventually, we have to make an emergency stop. It's getting near to winter and the weather is only going to get worse, so Paul pipes up and says, ['Paul' reads 27:10]. The captain of the ship wants to stop in a nicer place for the winter so they ignore Paul and we set off again.

[During the account of the storm you could incorporate a game of 'captain's coming' into the story, by getting them to all move to port/starboard/climb the rigging/throw the cargo overboard etc at the captain's command.]

Before long we are hit by a terrifying hurricane. It is so strong the sailors can no longer sail the ship. The boat is totally out of control. The water is pouring into the boat, as it's tossed from side to side. To stop the ship from sinking they have to throw all the baggage overboard! It's so bad Luke said this... [Luke reads 27:20]. They had tried all they could and now their hope is gone. They are sure the ship will sink, and they will all drown in the sea.

Use the 'How to prepare a Bible talk' section in the leader's handbook to help you.

## Visuals and props

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## Point 2. Hope is found

But there is one man on board who knows differently... [[Paul' reads 27:22-26](#)] Paul brings hope! God has told Paul that he and every other person on board the ship will live.

Sure enough, the next day the boat runs aground on the beach of an island called Malta. The boat is smashed to pieces, but all 276 people live. King Jesus has saved people from death. Almost straight away, Paul gets bitten by a poisonous snake! Everyone thinks that hope is lost again and he will die, but he lives! With Jesus' power, he also helps other people on that island who are dying to live by healing their illnesses. He has never met people like this before. They don't even speak the same language. King Jesus really is saving the ends of the earth from death.

Paul finally arrives in Rome and what does he do? The same thing he has done everywhere. He speaks about Jesus. Listen to the very last lines in the book [[read 28:30-31](#)] It seems a bit of a boring ending! But the journey gives us a picture of what is really going on in Paul's little house in Rome. People who listen to Paul are being saved from death. King Jesus is still at work saving the world from death.

In fact, the people on the ship and in Malta were only saved for a short time. They would still die one day. The people who believed Paul's words about Jesus in his little room in Rome have been saved from death forever. They are alive in Jesus' kingdom now.

## Conclusion

Looking around it may not seem like people are on a sinking ship, but anyone who is not part of Jesus' kingdom is in that kind of danger. They are facing God's punishment when they die. But God sent Jesus to die on the cross to take that punishment. And everyone who believes in him is forgiven and will live in his kingdom forever. This is the good news Paul was taking to Rome. And this is the good news we share too. And the good news our mission partners share around the world. There's nothing more important than people being saved from death- not even Taylor Swift or Euro 24.

Luke ends his book in this funny way, because he wants you to know that the story isn't finished. King Jesus hasn't stopped building his kingdom. He's at work now through people like me and you. We are part of the rest of the story. We can let others know that Jesus saves from death. There's nothing more important you can do.

## Pray

**Notes/ thoughts/ workings/ personal response:**

**Discussion: Digging deeper / ACTS**

Aim - Recap/ apply/ pray: \_\_\_\_\_


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**Materials:**

Use the 'How to lead a Digging deeper discussion' or 'How to lead ACTS prayer' section in the leader's handbook to help you prepare.

 **A.** God, I praise you \_\_\_\_\_

 **C.** God, I am sorry \_\_\_\_\_

 **T.** God, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_

 **S.** God, I ask you \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the 'How to prepare a e.g. memory verse/ game/ VIPP activity' section in the leader's handbook.

**Materials**







St Helen's  
Bishopsgate



St Helen's Children's Ministry

