

Aim of lesson

To introduce the second half of the book of Acts as the continuation of the work of preaching done by the apostles as a response to Jesus' command.

Bible background

Acts 1 to 8.

Outline of lesson

Before the lesson it will be useful to make a large copy of the map at the beginning of the workbook. This could be pinned on the wall and referred to as appropriate during the lessons. If you have a projector, you could scan the map and project it onto a large sheet of paper, then use a thick pen to follow the lines.

Jesus commands his disciples

Introduce the book of the Acts of the Apostles, who wrote it and what it is about. Use the questions to show briefly that the work of the apostles immediately followed the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Turn to the workbook and have the class look at the first picture. Ask them to keep it in mind as you all read Acts 1:1-11. At the end ask the class to identify the people, the place and the occasion shown in the picture and to fill in the missing words. Turn with the class to the map at the beginning of the workbook to identify the places named.

From Jerusalem to Samaria

Get the class to hunt through Acts 2 to find out where the apostles began preaching. Use the next four boxes on the worksheet for the class to record where the disciples were preaching and how far the gospel had spread. It is intended that the boxes should have the headings of (1) Jerusalem, (2) Judea and (3) Samaria. A sentence or two about the disciples preaching there should go under the illustration in the style of a newspaper or magazine.

The class could put a mark or flag on all the places on the large map where the gospel had reached. This could continue in later lessons.

Different from the law

Classes often have difficulty in distinguishing between what the Jews already believed and what this new gospel was. Try to get them to think of five differences. For example:

- Jesus has risen from the dead and is now on the right hand of God.
- He proves he is alive by the miracles that he has enabled the apostles to work.
- Salvation comes only through faith in him, not by keeping the law.
- So it is not the temple in Jerusalem that is important, but true worship of God.
- We need to repent and be baptised.
- Jesus will come back to raise the dead and establish the kingdom of God.

Interview with Peter

Ask the class to write down, without consulting their worksheets, three or four questions they would like to have asked one of the apostles. Ask for a volunteer to 'be' the apostle Peter and allow the rest of the class to ask him one or two questions each. This can take the form of a radio or television interview if you wish. This can be repeated with another volunteer.

Have the class complete the interview questions on the worksheet. Discuss their answers, especially the last. Bring out the apostles' desire to do what their Lord had commanded them. You may find the following references useful if they need help with the answers:

What is this new message you have been telling the people, Peter?	Acts 2:36 or 4:33
How many people have joined you?	Acts 2:41, 4:4, 5:14
Have you had any difficulties?	Acts 4:1-3; 12:1-11
What is the worst thing that has happened?	Acts 7:54-60; 12:1-2
Why are you doing all this?	Acts 4:20.

Digging deeper

Witnessing about what you believe

There are different ways of witnessing or preaching; this section looks at six examples from scripture.

Relevance to our lives

Ask the class to think about ways in which they could be witnesses to the Lord Jesus during the week.

Prayer

You may like to have a large sheet of paper pinned up so that your class can write up a one line prayer each week. Alternatively, this could be begun on a blank sheet of paper kept with each workbook and written by each member of the class individually. Seniors will find it easier to write a prayer than to say one. It may be possible for one member to read the prayer after it is written up.

Suggest ideas for the prayer this week such as thanking God that because of the bravery of the early church, the gospel has reached as far as us.

Other suggestions for activities

- The class could write a letter from a Christian in the early church to a friend describing how he had heard the gospel and what it meant to him.
- The class could be involved in making the large map as suggested at the beginning of the Outline of Lesson.