

You

OR YOU?



GLOBAL
INTERACTION

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 (NIV)



Introduction

In our culture today, individualism rules and it's with this framework we come to the Bible. Yet, the Bible was written in a time and culture that was soaked in family and community. When we consider Acts 1:8, the three references to 'you', are not actually 'You' the individual, but 'you' as a group.

Jesus is setting a vision of His mission for His followers to be witnesses of the Good News to friends, neighbours, strangers and people in other cultures, each playing our role within the rich community of the wider church.

It's not about doing everything, but it is definitely about doing something. Something that is meaningful, prayerful and inclusive.

May Mission Month



Key Scripture

Matthew 5:14 (NIV) "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden."

- You can either enhance or diminish the power of the salt and light in the world by the way you interact. What ways are you, and you as a community relating to the people around you?
- We are called to be witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus, not just as a historical fact, but also the reality that Jesus is alive today. This changes our lives and has the power to transform the world.
- In transforming the world, there is not a one-size-fits all approach. God has gifted each of us to contribute meaningfully to his witness in all spaces of the world. For some it will be for those within our families, others it will be our neighbours, or some will be called into other cities and cultures.



Reflection and Action

- Take time out to reflect on how God has shaped you.
 - What things in your life can you affirm or have others affirmed in you?
 - What areas or spaces would you like to grow in?
 - Is there a course you could attend, a book to read, a mentor to help you?
 - How can 'you' be adding to and growing the wider 'you' (community of believers), how might this affect your witness/mission?
- As a Jesus follower you are not only witnessing about Him but He in you. It is deeper than simply witnessing with your voice. It is a combination of everything about you.
 - You are a witness to something – what is your life saying about the one you claim to follow?
 - Are there spiritual practices that you could develop that would enhance your relationship with Jesus and your witness of Him?

A photograph of three people sitting on a boat deck. The person on the right is playing an acoustic guitar. The person in the middle is wearing yellow boots. The person on the left is wearing blue sneakers. The image has a green overlay and a white diagonal line.

Jerusalem

RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE



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Introduction

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step” (Chinese Proverb)

Often our natural tendency is to want to be at the finish line, or move on to the next big thing. Or it might be that we think we *should* be further along than we are. The reality is that nearly everything we do in life is a process or a journey.

And God in His grace calls us to follow Him and be a part of what He is doing in the community of believers. He has great things in store for us as we follow Him, He wants to transform our lives and use us to transform the whole world. But He always starts with where we are right now.



Key Scriptures

Acts 2:15, 32 (NIV) “These people are not drunk ... God has raised this Jesus to life and we are all witnesses of it.”

- The people nearby noticed what was happening to the disciples, and Peter answered their questions, pointing them to what Jesus was doing. The fact that this happened to them as a group of people, made the statement all the more powerful.

John 1:41-42 (NIV) “The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah.” And he brought him to Jesus.

- When we meet the living Jesus and experience His power in our lives we want the people we know and love to meet Him too.



Reflection and Action

- Reflect on your own faith journey, how has a relationship with Jesus transformed your life?
- How does this ongoing transformation affect your interaction with others – both within the church and with those outside?
- You are unique – your interests, vocation, opportunities, experience – and these place you in the middle of people (another community). How can you build more intentional relationships?

May Mission Month

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Judea

“OUR” NEIGHBOURHOOD



Introduction

Many people will be familiar with the kids' TV show Sesame Street, and its neighbourhood song (check it out on YouTube). The aim of the song was to introduce children to the different people they might meet. It reminds us of a broader point: that it is difficult and scary to engage with people if you don't know something of who they are.

In our cultural context, many people do not know who the people in the neighbourhood are! Jesus calls us to love our neighbours, and one of the first steps to knowing *how* to do this is to ask *who* these people are.



Key Scriptures

Acts 3:12, 15-16 (NIV) "Fellow Israelites ... We are witnesses of this. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see."

• The disciples went out into the city around them, meeting people's needs and sharing the Gospel

Luke 10:8-9 (NIV) "... eat what is offered to you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'"

• The disciples were sent to meet, stay with, share meals with (get to know) people in the local towns, and then to meet their physical and spiritual needs by pointing them to Jesus.



Reflection and Action

- Who are the people in your neighbourhood? Take a walk around and see who is out on the streets, where are the gathering places, who's not here?
- In your local community there are people who have both physical and spiritual needs. Do you believe that Jesus is the one who can meet them, and are you willing to go out and let them experience and hear that?
- What groups (sporting, reading, cultural etc.) are already meeting that you could become a part of to help you get to know the people in your community better?

May Mission Month

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Samaria

THE MARGINALISED



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 (NIV)



Introduction

In everyday English usage, a “good Samaritan” is a passer-by who steps in and helps when they don’t have to. But that is not how the phrase would have been heard when Jesus first used it. To his Jewish audience, it was an oxymoron – there was no such thing as a “good” Samaritan. Samaritans were despised.

So when we talk about Samaritans, don’t think of kindly people who help, think of the hated and marginalised, and the shock that it is as a disciple of Jesus to hear Him say that these people can be called “good” and are your neighbour, someone you are called to love and that God’s mission extends even to them.

May Mission Month



Key Scriptures

Acts 8:5-6 (NIV) “Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said.”

• Philip was willing to cross social and religious barriers to go to the hated Samaritans. And it seems that often those who are most marginalised are the first to listen closely to the Good News because they recognise their great need of it.

John 4:9, 29 (NIV) “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?”

• The Samaritan woman could not believe Jesus was willing to cross gender, cultural and religious barriers to engage with her. And then she was amazed that he really wanted to know her, and she wanted to tell everyone about the man who had made her feel known.

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Reflection and Action

- What groups of people would be considered marginalised, disliked or even hated in your community?
- Reflect on what response or role you and/or your church may have in interacting with these groups of people.
- What are some of the risks? What might the rewards be?
- No one is excluded from God’s love and grace, what prejudices do you have to ask God to help you overcome?




TO THE
ends of the earth

THE LEAST-REACHED



GLOBAL
INTERACTION

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Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8 (NIV)





Introduction

Over 2 billion people in the world today will go from birth to death without ever hearing the name of Jesus. Only 1% of Christian workers and resources go to the 40% of the world's population who do not have access to the Gospel.

The call to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth means finding ways to witness to Jesus' life in the languages and cultural contexts of those who have not yet heard, the least-reached. This is the biggest challenge in global mission today and is an injustice that needs to be confronted.

May Mission Month



Key Scriptures

Acts 13:47 (NIV) For this is what the Lord has commanded us, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."

• After the Jews had opportunity to hear the Good News, the disciples wanted to make sure the Gentiles who had no idea about the Messiah knew that He had come for them too.

Matthew 28:19 (NIV) "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations..."

• Jesus commanded his disciples to share the Good News with people of every nation or people group. But two thousand years later, there are still thousands of people groups who have never heard the Gospel in their own language and culture.



Reflection and Action

- How might you respond to the injustice of the resources distributed to the least-reached?
- Is this something you feel challenged by, might God be calling you to GO?
- Use the Global Interaction website and other resources to become more aware of global mission, particularly among the least-reached.
- Are there people in your church community (or wider community) that you can support in their cross-cultural mission efforts?