

Following the King – ‘Sharing the Good News’ (Acts 1:1 – 11)

“We’re engaged!” “I got the job!” “We’re having a baby!” We usually can’t wait to share our good news with others. In fact, our good news usually doesn’t feel complete until others are rejoicing with us. ‘*The Gospel*’ or ‘*The Good News*’ is the title that has been given to Jesus’ life-story and teaching.¹ Those who have experienced the life-transforming power of the gospel will understand why this term is so fitting. So if the gospel of Jesus really is good news then why are Christ’s followers often reluctant to share it with others? The Apostle Paul has said, *“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes...”* (Romans 1:16). The purpose of this Bible study is to remind us of the power of the gospel and to help and inspire us to share this good news with others.

1. Read Acts 1:1 – 3. What is the background and context to Jesus’ command to his disciples to spread the good news about his kingdom?
2. Read Act 1:4 – 5, 8. Why is the gift of the Holy Spirit necessary to enable us to believe and proclaim the good news? (See also John 16:5 – 13)
3. Read Acts 1:6. Why do you think the disciples were expecting an immediate and localised experience of God’s kingdom?
4. Read Act 1:6 – 8. In what ways did Jesus’ understanding of the scope of God’s kingdom go beyond the boundaries of his disciples’ understanding? In what ways might your own understanding of God’s kingdom be too limited?
5. Read Acts 1:9. Explain why Jesus’ ascension into heaven is such an important aspect of the gospel message. (See the excerpt from Peter’s sermon in Acts 2:32 – 37)
6. Read Acts 1:10 – 11. Why is Jesus’ imminent return such an important aspect of the gospel message?
7. Read Romans 1:16. Reflect upon/discuss some of the things that shake your confidence in the gospel’s saving power. What can you do to strengthen your confidence in the gospel?
8. Read 1 Peter 3:14 – 15. Discuss/reflect upon some practical ways that you can share your hope in Jesus with others.

¹ The word ‘gospel’ comes from the old English term ‘godspel’ (i.e. ‘glad tidings’). It is an English translation of the New Testament Greek word, ‘evangelion’ (from which we get the word evangelism) which means to share the ‘good news’.