



My Witnesses ... to the Ends of the Earth

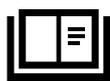
Acts 1:6-14

Welcome to 'Together, Apart', free intergenerational resources to help us be church together while we're keeping each other safe.

All the sections explore the same Bible passage in a range of creative ways. Choose whichever parts work best for you.

You can find lots more free resources like this at www.reflectionary.org

Here is what you will find in each resource pack:



A Word in Your Ear

A Bible passage that we can all learn from together, whatever our age.



Food for Thought

Aimed at adults and teens, some thoughts and questions on the passage.



Inner Space

A blank space for you to record your thoughts.



Looking Closer

A creative and interactive look at the Bible passage. Great for older children and anyone who likes a creative approach.



I Wonder...

An imaginative style of Bible study, perfect for younger children and those who like to immerse themselves in the Bible world.



Take a Break

A chill-out zone, with meditative colouring for adults and children, and links to audio recordings of the passage so that you can listen while resting your eyes.



Creation Station

A craft for children (or young-at-heart adults!)



Outside In

Suggestions for activities throughout the week that link with the Bible passage.



High 5

Suggestions for spending time with God.



A Word in Your Ear

Take your time reading this passage from The Bible. Ask God to help you hear. You can decorate the space around the words if you like.

Acts 1:6-9, 14

Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.

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.”

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

(NV)



Food for Thought

Click the links below for bonus reflections and activities on this passage from my blog, [The Reflectionary](#):

- [Bin Bag Ascension](#) – fun science activity
- [Reflection on Acts 1 and Luke 24](#) – including another fun science experiment
- [Sneak Peek for next week](#) – Pentecost Gyrocopters!

The disciples are great, aren't they? I mean, it's brilliant to have Jesus as a role-model and everything, but it's very comforting to see the disciples mess up time after time. It makes me feel so much better about my own shortcomings. If they could be that dim and Jesus still managed to use them, there's hope for me.

It's almost time for Jesus to finish his earthly ministry, and he will leave his disciples to carry on "all that he started to do and teach". (Acts 1:1) But look at the question they ask. "*Will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?*"

Q: What kind of kingdom were the disciples expecting? What extent would that kind of kingdom have in time and space?

When my children were younger, they went on one of those high-ropes adventure trails that had them roped up in safety gear while walking tightropes at rooftop level. The last challenge was to leap from the top of a telegraph pole to a trapeze that was just beyond reach. "I can't do that!" was the cry of each child as they stood wobbling on the tiny platform, me watching nervously from below.

I imagine that the first disciples had a similar reaction to being told that they were to take on the job of spreading God's kingdom to the ends of the earth. It was an enormous task, way beyond their ability.

Q: Why did Jesus give his disciples a job that they could not do by themselves?

Two of my three children leapt and grabbed the trapeze, the third leapt and missed, but all three were lowered safely down to great applause and were thrilled with their attempt. The only failure would have been a failure to try.

Jesus promises help for the task in hand. His disciples then, and by extension we, would receive the power of the Holy Spirit, poured out at Pentecost and now on all believers (Joel 2:28, Acts 10:44-48). Jesus does not promise everything his disciples want (they are not told the times and dates that we'd all be curious about), but we can be assured that where God calls, he also equips. The only failure would be a failure to try.

Q: What task is God calling you to, today?



Inner Space

What's going round your head? Here is a space for you to put your thoughts on paper. You can write, draw ... whatever you like. What will you put here?



Looking Closer

Jesus never travelled very far. He spent most of his time near the Sea of Galilee (a

big lake where some of his disciples were fishermen). He never went more than 100 miles from his childhood home in Nazareth.

Jesus and his disciples walked from town to town, sometimes sleeping outdoors (that was an OK thing to do), or sometime sleeping at friends' houses.

Imagine you are one of Jesus disciples. What was it like travelling around with Jesus, and walking along with him day after day?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for a student to write their response to the prompt above.A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for a student to write their response to the prompt above.

One of the last things that Jesus said to his followers was that they would be his *witnesses*. But what is a witness?

Some of my favourite TV shows are detective mysteries. At the start, the detective does not know what happened (how the magician robbed the bank while he was on stage, how the jewels ended up in the professor's study, who was the mysterious patient under all those bandages) and the detective needs a witness: *someone who knows what happened and can tell others*.

What did Jesus' followers know that they could tell to others as witnesses? Who could they be witnesses to?

Jesus said his followers would be witness in Jerusalem (the city they were in), and Judea (the country they were in), and then Samaria (the next-door country) and to the **Ends Of The Earth!** (This came true when his followers travelled all over the known world.)

Where can you be a witness?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for a student to write their response to the prompt above.



I Wonder...

Read or listen to the passage and let it sit in your mind for a while.

Which words, phrases or ideas jump out? What rings a bell or what have you noticed for the first time? Why do you think that might be?

I wonder what you think is the most important part.

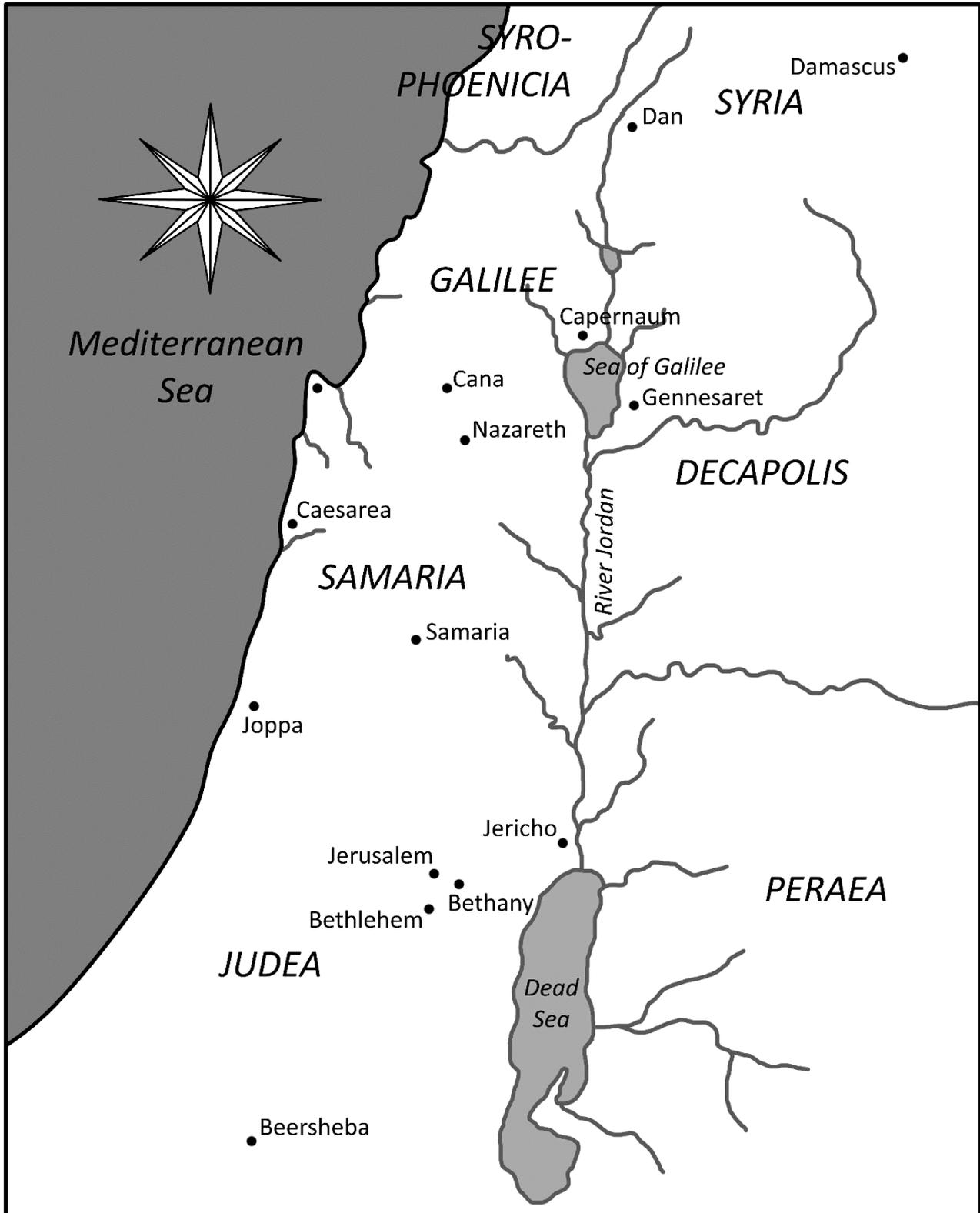
I wonder what will change because of these words.

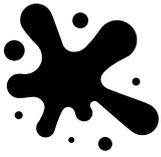


Take a Break

Put on some music, or listen to the passage being read out while you simply sit and be. You can colour the picture below, or fill it with zentangles, or you can just spend the time breathing.

Acts 1 on Bible Gateway audio [ESV](#) – [Message](#) – [NIV \(Dramatised\)](#) – [NIV \(Suchet\)](#)





Creation Station – The Earth!

Let's make the Earth (not life-sized!) to help us think about where we are called to be witnesses for Jesus. (Hint, it's everywhere!)

You will need:

- Two balloons
- Two bowls or large mugs
- Cling film
- PVA glue and water (50-50 mix)
- Paint brush
- Kitchen paper, newspaper or white paper napkins
- Map of the world
- Tissue paper in blue, green and brown OR paints

What to do:

1. Blow up your two balloons to the same size and add a little water before you tie the ends. (This is optional, but helps them to sit still in the bowls better.)

2. Sit the balloons in the bowls and cover the rounded ends with cling film.

3. Paint a layer of watery glue over the cling film to about half-way down the balloons.



Tear strips of kitchen towel, paper napkin or newspaper and drape them over the gluey surface to make two half spheres. Paint more glue on top of the paper.

4. Add more layers of paper, letting the glue dry between, until the papier-maché is solid enough to hold its shape. (This could take several days.)
5. Remove the balloons and cling film, and trim the paper so that your half spheres fit together. Add more strips of paper over the join to make a complete globe.
6. Use a map to draw on the shapes of the continents over the surface, and fill in the seas and land with green, brown and blue tissue paper or with paints.
7. Find where Jesus lived and where you live now on your globe. You can draw little people on if you like.

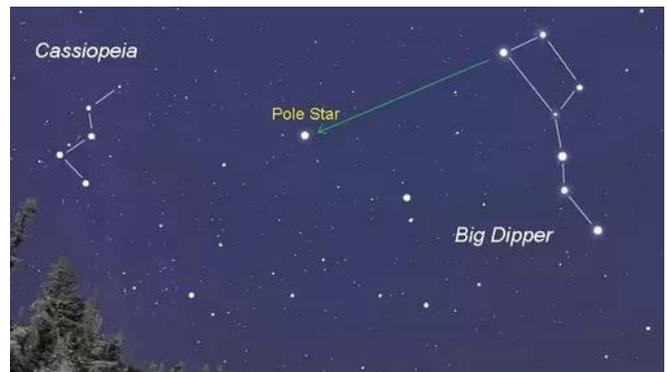


Outside In

You will be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth

It's good to get outdoors if you can do so safely, being sure to follow physical distancing rules. If you can't get out, try bringing the outside in.

- Look up at the night sky and find the Pole Star (Polaris). The whole sky appears to revolve around the Pole Star. Think about God who watches over the whole earth and beyond. (Southern hemisphere readers will need to use the Southern Cross.)



- Lie on your back outside on a sunny day and watch the clouds go by. Breathe in God's peace as you watch them gently float along.
- Find out if the International Space Station will be visible from where you live this week. (You can check this at <https://spotthestation.nasa.gov/>) See if you can spot it and give the astronauts a wave! As you do so, remember that God watches over every single one of us on the whole earth.
- Get some sand, soil, pebbles etc, and some toy figures on a tray to make a model of the land where Jesus lived. (You can use a map from a Bible to help). Now take some of the figures for Jesus' followers and move them a long way from your model, to 'the ends of the earth'!

What else can you think of?

My ideas:

Which will you do this week?



High 5

Spend five minutes talking and listening with God. Here is one way:

Sky Prayers

While the disciples were talking to Jesus, a cloud hid him, and he was gone. Jesus does not live on a cloud in the sky, and heaven is not a place 'up there', but looking at the sky and space can help us to think about God.

The sky is a place of wonder and beauty, a place beyond ourselves, yet it surrounds us here on earth every day. Space contains things we cannot get our heads around, like black holes, and it is unimaginably bigger than words can express.

All of these can help us to think about how wonderful and beautiful God is; how very different from us and yet with us every day; how beyond our minds to contain. Here are some prayer starters. How will you carry on?

Sun

The sun is the source of all life on earth and Jesus said that he is the Light of the World.

Dear God, thank you for all the life on earth and for Jesus, our light. Thank you for ...

Clouds

Clouds can hide the light of the sun, and make our world seem cold and dark.

Dear God, we pray for people who feel they are in a sad and difficult world at the moment. Please look after ...

Sunset

When the sun's light is scattered through the atmosphere, we see colourful displays of light.

Dear God, your disciples scattered throughout the whole world, telling people about you.

May we display your goodness and love in our lives. Please help me to ...

Moon

The moon reflects the sun's light to us at night, and Jesus said that we are to be lights to the people around us.

Dear God, please help me to live my life as a child of your light, and to reflect that light to the people I meet today. Please help me to ...

Stars

Stars and other galaxies are so far away that the light can take millions of years to get here, but God was around even before the galaxies and stars were formed!

Dear God, you are bigger than space and your love lasts for longer than for ever. You are amazing! Thank you ...

What other prayers can you add?