

Good News people

Study 1: Good News down through the years

Introduction:

Mission is more than evangelism; and evangelism is not about foisting your beliefs on some poor person in an unfriendly and culturally inappropriate way. It is about showing and sharing the good news of God love within the world he loves.



Our English word **mission**, comes from the Latin word *missio*, which means sending/being sent. The term, *Missio Dei*, which has become popular in nearly all contemporary mission books, podcasts etc. means the ‘sending of God’. In the Old and New Testaments, God sends out people on mission, and indeed sends out ‘himself’ as the Father sends the Son ‘into the neighbourhood... full of grace and truth. It

will greatly help us when thinking of mission, to think in terms of **the mission of God** – God’s purpose for mankind and for the planet we live on.

The aim of this small group study is to help us to understand how mission fits into the story of the Bible. Not as an added extra – to be dreaded, but as something that has always been central to the story of God and of his people and is now for us as followers of Jesus in the 21st Century.

One of the passages we’ll consider in this study is found in Luke 24. This is a much-loved passage, but tonight we begin by focusing particularly on what Jesus says in v. 27.

Bible reading:	Get a volunteer in the group to read Luke 24:13-27
Group discussion:	What Scriptures is Luke referring to here in v. 27? (3-5 mins)
Bible reading:	In a moment get a volunteer in the group to read Luke 24:36-49. Notice these events and the previous passage take place on the same day.
	Look particularly at v. 45, and then at v. 46-49
Discussion:	What is Jesus doing here in this passage? (3-5 mins)

The Bible is basically the story of the mission of God. It can be summarised as:

CREATION – FALL – REDEMPTION – CREATION (or re-creation)

In Luke 24 it seems that Jesus is helping the disciples to see where he fits into the Old Testament scriptures – and how he is so very central to the story of the mission of God. Not only this, but in v. 48 Jesus says to his disciples, ‘You’re the first to hear and see it. You’re the witnesses.’ (The Message). The mission of God story is their story too.

The Old Testament and mission theologian Chris Wright points out that the reason the first disciples were so focused on the mission of God, is because they realised that they played a central role in it. They knew their story - they knew they were part of it – and they knew they had a part to play in God’s on-going mission to mankind.

For the remainder of this study, we’re going to look at some of the passages that help us to understand this more thoroughly. **Please remember that the aim here is not simply to increase our head-knowledge**, but more importantly **to see how we can model our lives on the lives of those early Christians** (who modelled their lives on Jesus) as they committed to and engaged in God’s mission to the world.

Bible readings: Get volunteers in the group to read:
John 20:19-23; Acts 1:1-8; Matthew 28:16-20

Discussion Questions:

Can you see a common theme in these three passages?

To what extent is Jesus passing on to the disciples the mission that God the Father had committed to him (the reason he was born into the world)?

Having read these passages, how central was continuing this mission to the way of life of the first disciples?

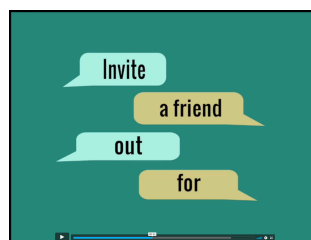
Do you think that Jesus intended things to be different or the same for those who would become Christians centuries later? Why do you think that?

Having considered these verses in some detail – in what ways might God want these things to impact on your life? What changes might you consider:

...as a church?

...as an individual?

Spend 2-3 minutes in quietness considering what you **personally** are going to do about this in the next 3-4 weeks? (Make a note of this – so you can pray and reflect further on this).



As a ‘starter’ why not commit to one of the suggested ‘challenges’ in the **Week 1 video**?

As a group you may find it helpful to pray that God will help you to increasingly see your community through the lens of his mission (‘being sent’) to the world as you look to the future.

