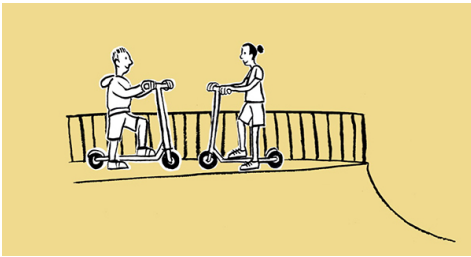


# Good News people

## Study 1: Good News down through the years

### Leaders' Notes



**Aim of this study:** to show that mission is not an add-on for the very keen, rather eccentric, or un-cool people (who don't care what others think of them). It is in fact an expression of all that God is – it is God himself reaching into to the world, eventually coming into it himself, and sending out ALL his disciples into the world he loves to show and share his mercy and grace.

#### Introduction:

For some of us, one of our less enjoyable childhood memories is of being given a (daily?) teaspoonful of Cod Liver Oil. It tasted revolting – but we were told, 'It's good for you!' For some Christians, mission appears to be the discipleship equivalent of Cod Liver Oil – it's to be dreaded, but so-say, it's good for you. There will no doubt be more than one reason for this, but one is likely to be a misunderstanding of what mission is. Some of us sadly, have been led to believe that mission equals evangelism, which in turn amounts to verbally foisting your beliefs on some poor person in an unfriendly and culturally inappropriate way. This leaves the majority of us thinking – no thanks, not for me!

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 21<sup>st</sup> 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) <i>(Leader's hint: Jesus links his life and ministry with the message ('story') of the Old Testament and shows that his life and ministry are a continuation of what God had previously been doing, in other words the mission of God).</i>

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

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

We'll say more about this later in this series, but here 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 was 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?

*(It would be great if someone could take a note of these things – to help you to reflect on them during the next few weeks).*

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? Links to all the videos are on the Good News People page of the WEBA website, under Resources:

<https://www.webassoc.org.uk/resources/good-news-people/>



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.