

The New Testament Basis for Evangelism and Missions

By John Massey

Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

Assignment One

Read the comments related to Luke 24:44-45 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: What is the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Old Testament?

Assignment Two

Read the comments related to Luke 24:46-48 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: What is the good news, and how does it relate to the mission of the church?

Assignment Three

Read Acts 1:8. Then read the comments related to Luke 24:49 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following questions: What is the power from on high that Jesus promises to His disciples, and how does this relate to the fulfillment of their mission?

Scripture to Memorize

"He said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.'" Luke 24:46-47

Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand the basis for the Christian duty to reach all people with the gospel as presented in the New Testament.

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It's in the Book

30 minutes

Real-Life Scenario

Imagine at your work a new co-worker arrives from Saudi Arabia. You notice that he only eats food especially prepared, has other customs that are strange to you and refers to himself as a Muslim. Should you see him as a foreigner to avoid, an enemy to fear, or one to engage with about your Christian faith?

The Basis for Missions and Evangelism

Read Luke 24:44-49 out loud

Studying the Passage

Verse 44. everything. . . must be fulfilled. Jesus told His disciples that He had come to fulfill what the Old Testament had already said about Him. God's plan from the beginning was to provide salvation for all peoples. He first promised His salvation for the nations in Genesis 3:15 and later to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3. Jesus Christ, the One to whom the Old Testament bears witness, brought this salvation to all men through His death, burial and resurrection. Jesus said that all that was written about in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.

Verse 46. Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead. Jesus gave instructions for His disciples to follow after His death and resurrection regarding the mission He was giving to them.

Verse 47. that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations. The mission Jesus gave to the apostles is the same mission for the church today.

The New Testament basis for missions is found in the person of Jesus Christ and what He did in His death and resurrection for all people. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promise of salvation offered to all. The responsibility and privilege of every disciple in missions and evangelism is to share who Christ is and what He has done for the world.

Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now report on the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Old Testament.

Discussion Question

According to Luke 24:45, how did the disciples come to understand what the Old Testament said about Jesus Christ? What does this say about how we come to understand who Jesus Christ is?

On Your Own

Read Isaiah 53 and list some ways Jesus Christ fulfills this Old Testament prophecy.

The Plan for Missions and Evangelism

Studying the Passage

Verse 47. proclaimed . . . to all the nations. The New Testament plan for missions and evangelism is for believers to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ—primarily His death, burial, and resurrection—to all peoples. The word *proclaim* means “to preach.” We can proclaim the gospel in many different ways. Not all are called to preach the gospel as their vocation, but all believers are called to share Christ with those who are lost.

Jesus commands the disciples to proclaim the message of repentance and forgiveness to “all nations.” The Greek word for *nations* means “people groups who share a similar culture, race and language.”

Verse 47. repentance for the forgiveness . . . proclaimed. The word *repentance* means “a change of mind that leads to a change of action.” Jesus Christ accomplished a complete salvation by dying for the sins of the world and rising again to receive anyone who would repent and believe.

The other important part of the message that disciples proclaim is forgiveness. The word *forgiveness* means “to release one from a debt.” In this case, our sin has created a debt we can never pay back to God. The wages of sin is death. Jesus took our debt and paid it by dying for our sin. He took our penalty and made it possible for us to be released from the debt.

Verse 48. witnesses of these things. Christ commands all believers to share the message of salvation in love to all people. They are to *witness* to the truth of Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection. Every disciple is called to be a witness to the gospel.

Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now share an answer to the questions: What is the good news, and how does it relate to the mission of the church?

Discussion Question

Discuss the meaning of the words *repentance* and *forgiveness*. How do they relate to the mission of the church to reach all people?

On Your Own

In the space below, make a list of about five people from a different race and culture who are not Christ followers. Take a moment to pray for them and ask God to give you a chance to share the message of Christ with them.

The Power for Evangelism and Missions

Studying the Passage

Verse 49. sending the promise . . . clothed with power. The New Testament power for missions and evangelism is the Holy Spirit. The word *clothed* is in the passive voice, which means we are dependent on God to give us this power. The power is His and not ours. Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit as the “promise” and the “power” that come from the Father. In Luke 24:45 Jesus reminded His disciples that the Old Testament message was about Him. In verse 49, He assured the disciples that He would also give them the power of the Holy Spirit to bear witness to Him and fulfill the mission He had given to them. Luke also wrote the book of Acts. He says more specifically in Acts 1:8 that the promise and power of the Father is the Holy Spirit who will give the disciples and the church the power for witness.

Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share an answer to the questions: What is the power from on high that Jesus promises to His disciples, and how does this relate to the fulfillment of their mission?

Discussion Question

How does the Holy Spirit help the church fulfill its mission of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to all people everywhere?

On Your Own

Ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit to share the gospel with a non-Christian friend or family member. Write your prayer in the space below.

Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

Since Last Week

5 minutes

Grace-Filled Accountability

5 minutes

Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service

5 minutes

Prayer

7 minutes

At Home: Nail It Down

The New Testament contains four Great Commission passages that describe the mission Jesus gave to the church (see Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-49; and John 20:19-23). These passages help us understand the New Testament basis, plan, and power for missions.

The message of the gospel is the primary mission of the church (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-8). The Son of God came from heaven to earth to fulfill all that was promised by God in the Old Testament. He was the One who would come to die for the sins of the world and rise again on the third day, offering forgiveness of sins to all who would repent.

God calls all men everywhere to repent and turn to His Son (see Acts 17:30-31). Without Christ, the church would have no mission to fulfill. The New Testament gives the full and final picture of God's plan for the salvation of the nations by bearing witness to the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ commissions the church of every generation to proclaim the good news to all people of His coming to die in order to forgive them of the sin debt they owe (see John 1:29; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Jesus also rose again to give new life to all who will repent and believe in His name (see John 1:12-13; Romans 6:1-7). The mission of the church is to preach the gospel to all nations and send out those whom God has called to share Christ in a different culture and country (see Romans 10:14-15).

God never commands His people to obey without also giving them the power to do so. The Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit to live inside every believer to enable the church to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ (see Acts 1:8).

Follow up Question

What are the primary message and the mission of the church?

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.