

Our Kingdom Mandate

Acts 1:4-11 (January 12, 2025)



If you believe the press – every time a government changes, instead of a focus on the task being the first order of business – the first order seems to be infighting over the spoils.

Instead of – how can we serve? It is – what ministerial job do I get?

Do I get to use the government jet? Do I get an expense account?

As the death of Jesus approached – it was a bit like that among the Disciples.

The death of Messiah meant one thing to them – a restored national kingdom was about to come and Jesus is the One who can give them of a place of greatness.

So, they fought – Jesus can I sit on your right hand and my brother on your left?

Jesus, remember me in the kingdom? – I want a place of privilege.

Imagine the crushing disappointment when they realised – it is not enjoy the spoils of the kingdom time – but get to work to build His kingdom time.

And I can only imagine what went through their minds when Jesus said – you will be My witnesses in **Jerusalem** – fair enough – **Judea** – inconvenient but they are our brother Jews – **Samaria** – no way – they are traitors, half-breeds – they don't deserve salvation – and **the ends of the earth** – but Gentiles are there – dogs – the ones who oppress us – sharing with Gentiles – no – I can't do it – I won't do it!

When you read the Great Commission – either at the end of Matthew or the beginning of Acts – how do **you** feel?

Is it inconvenient? You know I am so busy with life right now – mortgage, kids, school – I will get to it but later.

Is it unpalatable? I reluctantly accept that Muslims and homosexuals are going to be saved – but I really don't want to be the one to do it.

Is it embarrassing? There are bits about the Bible I find awkward – slavery, women, creation, election, children dying. I just know if I share the gospel people will ask me about these.

Is it too frightening? I just don't want to share with those I know well – they might think me foolish and weak.

Truth is – it is all those things and much more.

Being a witness is one of the hardest things we do in the Christian life.

But here is the reality – if you are a Christian – you don't have a choice – you **are** to be a witness.

We have a job to do. It is the reason we were called, empowered and sent.

Today, we come to:



1:4-11 Our Kingdom Mandate

Basically, Jesus tells us very clearly what our mission is.

The point of this morning's sermon is actually the message of the entire book of Acts.



We must strive to see His kingdom come, through the empowering of His Spirit, by witnessing to the nations, until He comes again.

You read this – how does it strike you?

I am a nobody – what can I do to reach the nations?

How can the church ever reach Muslim lands or North Korea? – It is too hard.

I am more a prayer and giver type than actually witnessing. I will let others do the evangelism.

Yes – this is a hard task.

When you read Acts – you find the saints giving, being imprisoned, beaten, left for dead, even dying.

It is so hard. Any sane person would say – I am not signing up for this.

But Acts tells us Jesus is the risen King.

And you cannot say no to the risen Jesus.

This task is ours – every last one of us.

We begin this morning looking at the first part of **Our Kingdom Mandate**:



1:4-7 The Purpose Of Our Mission

What Jesus is actually telling us to do.

Look at Acts 1:4–5:

While he was with them, he **commanded** them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the Father's promise. "Which," he said, "you have heard me speak about; for John baptized with water, but you will be **baptized with the Holy Spirit** in a few days."

We are looking at the last words Jesus ever uttered before He ascended to the Father.

Read the Bible – as great leaders are dying or nearing the end – they gather and address those who will continue their ministry.

Think of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Paul.

They give clear instructions to stay faithful and finish the task.

Last words are important. You want to pass the baton to those who follow you.

But if you are ever to heed the last words of anyone – the last words of Jesus are the words to heed.

This is what Jesus felt crucial enough to leave ringing in the ears of the church.

Note that this is not a mere proposal or even a strong suggestion.

It is a **command** – a **commission**.

That is why we say this is **Our Kingdom Mandate**.

Our King has given us our orders.

He begins by saying – the promised baptism of the Spirit is near.

But there is so much confusion over what this baptism is.

This is a very complex and controversial subject. I will get into this in chapter 2.

But for now – I understand that – **The baptism of the Spirit formed the church at Pentecost – to be the vehicle He will use to reach the nations.**

Basically, the baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost is when the clock of history ticks over from Israel to the church – Old Covenant to New Covenant.

Now it is the task of the church to grow the kingdom.

Acts 1:6–7:

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, are you restoring the **kingdom** to Israel at this time?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.”

Jesus has made it very clear He is about to leave. Soon they will not see Him again in this world.

If this was your last chance to ask Him a question – what would be your burning question?

Maybe your question might be:

Jesus can you please clear up some important but frankly confusing stuff.

Divorce and remarriage? Spiritual gifts – please? Or how do you reconcile sovereignty and free will?

Maybe your burning question is far more frivolous – before You go – I just have to know – will Australia ever win the soccer world cup before the world ends?

The Disciples chose to ask this – “Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?”

You might think – really – that is their question? Well, if you were a Jew – I suspect that would be burning in your mind as well.

In their mind the very end of the world is at hand and that means the final kingdom is about to begin.

Notice the word – **restoring** *not* **beginning**.

And notice – **to Israel**.

They are thinking David only greater.

When you read the Old Testament, there are many promises made to Israel that a King greater than David will come.

He will vanquish every enemy.

He will make Israel the head and not the tail.

Jesus is born – angels say – this One will inherit the throne of David.

He does the miracles associated with Messiah.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowds greeted Him as King. John 12:13:

They kept shouting: “**Hosanna!** ... the King of Israel!”

And the coming of the King – means the coming of His Kingdom.

But, they of all people should have known better. He has been repeatedly telling them that this is **not** the time for the final stage of the God’s plan.

If you look back to verse 3 – Jesus had been speaking about the kingdom for forty days.

And even further back the Gospels are filled with His teaching on the kingdom – My kingdom is **not** of this world, My kingdom is within you, My kingdom grows like a mustard seed.

Jesus had repeatedly talked about growing the kingdom by going to the nations.

Their question indicates that despite years of teaching about the kingdom and then forty more days – they still didn’t get what was about to happen.

So, when Jesus said – this is not the time – it still came as a huge shock – even though it should not have.

Imagine if the last trump sounded and Jesus appeared on the clouds and you were raptured.

What are you thinking?

Me – I am thinking – it’s eternal kingdom time – eternal rest. Hallelujah!

The kingdom of earth is about to become the kingdom of heaven and my eternal life is about to begin. Thank you Jesus – I am so ready.

I couldn't imagine how I would feel if Jesus said – not so fast – you read those Scriptures wrong – the plan is to reach still more nations, see still more come to salvation.

So, I what I am doing is giving you help.

I am raising the saints of all the ages to join you who were living – now all of you = get back to earth and get cracking taking My gospel to the nations.

I would be crushed.

This is something like how the Disciples would have felt.

So, Jesus responds and very directly says – you have misunderstood:

The **Timing** Of The Kingdom
The **Nature** Of The Kingdom
The **Domain** Of The Kingdom

Let's be honest – understanding prophecy is difficult.

I know some of you think it is really clear – but I am sorry – you are wrong – it isn't.

If I polled you all about the prophecies concerning the millennial kingdom.

Some of you will be adamant – it is obvious that it happens here **on earth** *after* Jesus returns.

Others will say – no it is happening *right now* **in heaven** with the saints reigning.

Others will say – clearly it is happening *now* **on the earth** as the gospel goes forward.

Others would say – what is this millennial kingdom stuff?

Now, truth is part of me is pretty sure my particular view is right – but part of me also says – hang on if such brilliant and godly men and women put it together differently – maybe it is not as clear cut as I think.

In fact, there is a fair chance none of us have it right.

The Disciples were sure the Old Testament said – Messiah comes and the final kingdom comes there and then.

They thought it was so clear – but they were wrong.

Jesus says – sorry – that is not how those prophecies are to be interpreted.

First – you misunderstood:



The **Timing** Of The Kingdom

They thought – the coming of Messiah means the setting up of the final stage of the kingdom.

Jesus says:

It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.

Basically – God has a plan – He has revealed that plan in Scripture – **but** – He has **not** revealed it in such a way we can be definitive about the timing of events.

That part is clear – so I do not know why so many of us read this and still think – nah – I disagree with Jesus – I can actually work out the times and periods.

I would sure love a dollar for every time someone has spoken, emailed or written me with charts, verses and proof that *this time* the end is imminent – this is what must happen next on the divine calendar.

This thing happens in Israel – that event in Russia – an earthquake in Indonesia – Trump winning – Craig – I can't believe you can't see it – Antichrist is rising or the Second Coming is obviously about to happen.

I have seen so many charts saying this is definitely the sequence of events to come.

I have seen so many variations of charts – 7 years – Antichrist – Apostasy – Gog and Magog – Rapture – and we must be here.

This nation being Christianised – this technological advance – we are here on the timeline.

Again, God set His plan from before the world began – but He has **never** made the exact details clear enough to us to know the exact sequence and timing. Jesus said concerning the end – Matthew 24:36:

Now concerning that day and hour no one knows—neither the angels of heaven nor the Son—except the Father alone.

You know what – after the cross we can go back and reread the Old Testament prophecies like Ezekiel 34-39 or Isaiah 61-66 or Zechariah 12-14 – and now we see – of course there are two comings – one to atone for sin and one to finally remove sin, Satan and death.

We see it now – but if we lived before AD 30 – **none** of us would have seen it.

None of us would have had two comings of Messiah on our end times chart – **it isn't** that clear.

It is the same with the prophecies about the return of Jesus.

Being definitive about the sequence of events – or dates – it has universally ended with egg on face.

Brothers and sisters, we know the basic events we simply don't know the exact sequence let alone dates.

We are to study those passages and long for His return.

So, feel free to have a view on the end – in fact you should.

But hold it lightly – except for the truths that are certain – His return, judgment and eternal kingdom.

The study of the end times should have one purpose – to drive us to see people come to Christ before the end.

To try and be more definitive ends in division and disillusionment.

In fact, even here in our church – the pastors don't agree on how the end plays out.

On a long drive recently – the pastors were discussing this.

While we all agree Jesus *could* come at any time, the way the passages lay out made some suspect it more likely certain things have to happen first.

So, some thought the end is more likely within 100 maybe 200 years.

Others thought it more likely to be 1500 to 2000 years.

Both sides had Scriptures.

I don't tell you this so you can choose a side – or tell Rhoi he is dreaming – get on the side of the angels.

I tell you this because the only thing we all agreed on – **no one knows any date or even rough timeframe with any certainty – except the certainty that those events absolutely will occur. So, live as if the end is near.**

During COVID, date setting went crazy. People in this very church and elsewhere in Brisbane went too far.

They saw things fitting their sequence of events and set dates.

They narrowed it to a month – and justified that by saying Jesus says no one knows the day or the hour – He didn't say month or year.

I can tell you this – about the only thing close to certain about their dates was – they were going to be wrong.

Every one of those dates passed – and guess what – we are still here. And those who were so incredibly certain – well now no one want to talk about it or they just mumble – I misunderstood – but here is the real date.

One lady I know well sent me emails filled with charts and Scriptures – and it all led to a date – October 2022.

I spoke on the phone with her – she had been working on this night and day for a year. Barely doing her job, neglecting her family, no exercise, little sleep.

She was convinced the end was nigh.

I asked her – OK you believe Jesus will return in October 2022 – since you believe judgment is coming – how many people have you shared the gospel with in the past 12 months – since their eternal fate rests on it and soon they will have no further chance to repent – how many?

Long, long pause. She said – I haven't shared with anyone – because I believe my task is to work out the date – tell the church and your task is to warn them and share the gospel.

Utter rubbish.

Study the end but if your eschatology – your view of the end – does not compel you to evangelise, send, pray, give as if the end is imminent – whether it turns out to be next week or next millennium –here is what is certain – **you have misunderstood the Bible.**

The Disciples had kingdom work to do – and they are to get to it and keep doing it until Jesus says – this time is over.

The *second* error concerned:



The **Nature** Of The Kingdom

It is a spiritual kingdom **not** a national one.

You will be my **witnesses**.

You build His kingdom by witnessing – not by armies and wars.

We are witnesses – not soldiers, political leaders or administrators.

You build this kingdom soul by soul.

Witness becomes a key word in Acts.

There are primary witnesses – like the Apostles. We are secondary witnesses.

We take their witness concerning Christ – the lost believe it and come to faith based on this testimony – and the kingdom grows spiritually.

This kingdom grows by people being born again – not by being born into a nation – or conquered into a nation.

This should be clear – but even today we miss the nature of the kingdom.

Theonomy, Christian nationalism – these are errors that see the task of the kingdom of God as growing into the political and national sphere.

No – the kingdom is within you.

Jesus is clear:

“My kingdom is not of this world.”

When you read Acts – all of the references to the kingdom relate to preaching the gospel – being witnesses – and the church growing.

The kingdom of God in this age is **not** a political empire like Rome or Britain – it is a kingdom where nobodies like us – men, women, poor, outcasts – continue to grow in number and spread among the nations.

The *third* error concerned:



The **Domain** Of The Kingdom

All the world – not just **Israel**.

In Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

In the minds of the Disciples the kingdom was always going to be a **Jewish** kingdom.

Centred in the Promised Land.

Again, understandable.

But so many Old Testament passages hint of a kingdom that extends to the nations.

Prophecies like Ezekiel 37 seem to point to the inclusion of Gentile nations in this kingdom.

So why not a purely Jewish kingdom?

Think about it this way.

What if Jesus had answered their question by saying – yep – now is final kingdom time.

So, in AD 30 – the last trump sounds – the rapture occurs – the dead in Christ rise from the grave and living believers are transformed in the twinkling of an eye.

Jesus picks up the sword and wipes out every last unbeliever, demon and Satan himself – and sets up a Jewish kingdom.

Would this glorify God?

I want to suggest – **no**.

God's glory requires the victory of Christ to be demonstrated throughout this fallen world. It requires His victory in all nations of the world.

Jesus wants worshippers from **every** people – not just from one small, insignificant nation.

So, for the glory of God – the gospel has to go **to the nations**.

So, summing this up – what is **The Purpose Of Our Mission?**



We must strive to see His kingdom come.

Building His kingdom – building His church by seeing more men and women proclaim Christ as King.

This means we have harvest work, kingdom work to do.

Next, Jesus tells us:



1:8a The Power Of Our Mission

Acts 1:8a:

But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come on you.

I am going to unpack this in chapter 2 – where I will show that the baptism of the Spirit and the empowering of the Spirit are related but not the same.

The baptism is where the Spirit indwells us and unites us to Christ and His church.

This empowering mentioned here is something that happens after salvation and is the power to build His kingdom.

We find this power mentioned in passages like Luke 24:48-49:

You are **witnesses** of these things ... stay in the city until you are **empowered from on high**.

In the early days of the church at times it involved miraculous gifts – but even in Acts this is uncommon.

More often it is the power is to witness with boldness, to suffer, to persevere.

In Acts 4 we find a great example of this.

Peter has already been baptised with the Spirit – but he goes before the Sanhedrin. Then he is filled with the Spirit not to do a miracle before them – but to preach with boldness.

The Spirit gives us the power to share the gospel boldly.

Why do we need this?

Because evangelism is one the hardest things we are called to do as a Christian.

99% of us find it far easier to serve than to witness. Clean the toilets, set up church, teach kids – great – give money – sure – share with my neighbour – please don't ask me to do that – I would rather clean the toilets for a year.

Pastors too. 99% of Pastors find it easy to preach an evangelistic sermon – but mind-numbingly hard to share the gospel with our next-door neighbour. Count Rhoi, Han and me in that group.

But in the Spirit – we have power to overcome that.

The Peter in Acts 4 seems very different.

The night before Jesus died – Peter is approached – aren't you a Galilean – don't you know Jesus?

No – don't know what you are talking about – my accent is bad but certainly not Galilean.

Not once but three times.

Then you come to Acts 2 and here is Peter boldly proclaiming Christ to everyone.

Acts 4 he is proclaiming it in the face of death.

What changed?

Acts 4:31:

They were all **filled** with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God **boldly**.

One of the main works of the Spirit is to embolden weak fearful – us – to be witnesses.

If you are struggling to share the gospel – ask the Spirit to make you bold.

Empower you to keep going despite the disappointments, the persecution, the divisions, the struggle.

Gospel work is not flashy. It is hard, it is messy, it often looks more like failure than victory.

But Jesus uses imperfect, weak you and me – so He gets the glory.

Listen, the task seems beyond us.

And, it would be – **except** for the Spirit.

The Lamb **will** have the victory.

Not because of you or me – but because of the power of Christ in us.

The kingdom is like a mustard seed that grows slowly – has setbacks and advances – but keeps growing – by His power.

Frankly, the church should have died out 2000 years ago.

The fact it turned the known world upside down and continues to reach the nations is not due to our spectacular efforts and brilliant apologetics.

It is due to the fact that the Spirit of God within us empowers us to see Christ proclaimed among the nations.

Whatever view of the work of the Spirit you hold – all should agree – one main work of the Spirit is to empower us to do something very hard – to be bold evangelists before a world that doesn't want to hear our gospel.

Summing this up – we can say that **The Power Of Our Mission** comes:



Through the empowering of His Spirit.

We have been given a task that is humanly impossible – but certainly not divinely impossible.

With God – all things – even the salvation of heart hearts and closed nations – is possible.

Personally, I do **not** believe that the purpose for the empowering of the Spirit was so you could speak in a private prayer language **or** not have to bother learning Swahili **or** to be able to heal.

But whatever your view – I think we can unite in that one main purpose of the empowering is to see the kingdom spread to the outermost parts through us.

We live in an age where we can step back and see how many nations have been reached – how many languages have the Bible – how many cultures have churches.

Indonesia – New Guinea – Australia – no one in the days of Acts knew these nations existed. Now there are many churches there to the glory of God.

God is doing the impossible.

So, pray and ask God to give you the boldness to share with someone, invite someone – and pray that God would open blind eyes.

This is how the kingdom comes.

Next Jesus gives:



1:8b The Plan Of Our Mission

Acts 1:8b:

And you will be my **witnesses** in **Jerusalem**, in all **Judea** and **Samaria**, and to **the ends of the earth**.

The power we receive is power to be witnesses.

Not just to Israel – but to all nations.

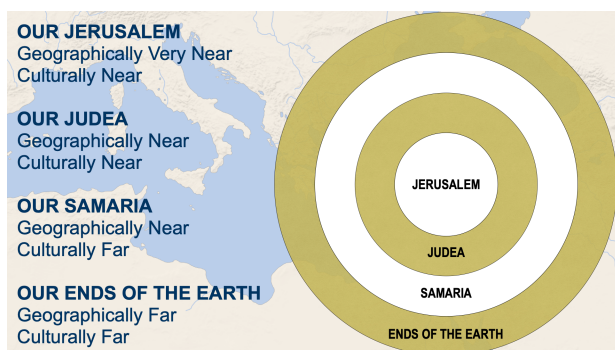


The gospel moves from the capital of the Jews – **Jerusalem** – to the capital of the Gentile Empire – **Rome**.

Against all odds – in the face of great persecution – it simply cannot be stopped.

Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the ends of the earth.

It is important to understand what this means for us.



OUR JERUSALEM

Geographically Very Near
Culturally Near

These are the people who live right where we do and are culturally very similar to us.

Neighbours, workmates, mums at school, family.

OUR JUDEA

Geographically Near
Culturally Near

These are the people who live in our country or nearby and are culturally very similar to us.

Those pagans way across the Brisbane River or down on the Gold Coast – in other parts of Queensland, Australia even New Zealand.

They are not the low hanging fruit of people next door – but we get them culturally.

OUR SAMARIA

Geographically Near
Culturally Far

These are the people who live in our country or nearby but are culturally different to us.

Cultures that have come to Brisbane. Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs who live in our suburbs and go to our schools.

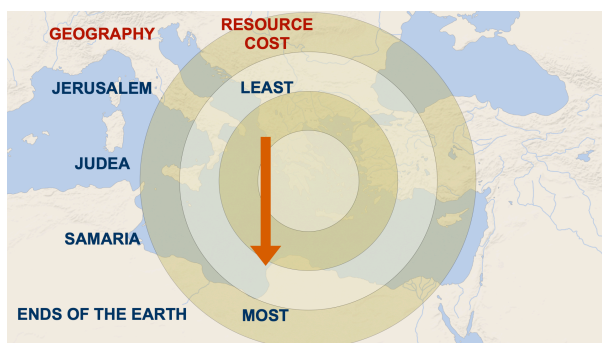
OUR ENDS OF THE EARTH

Geographically Far
Culturally Far

These are the people who live in other countries are culturally different to us.

These are the lands and cultures we need to go as or send missionaries to.

A few things about this:



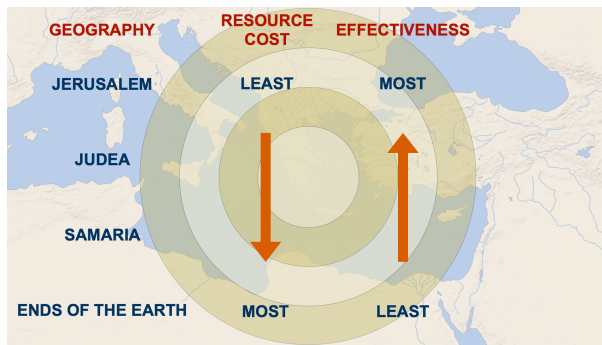
In terms of **resource cost** – money, training, infrastructure – Our Jerusalem is the easiest to reach and the ends of the earth the hardest.

It costs you nothing to pray for and then invite a neighbour to dinner and share the gospel.

You know enough to tell them why you know Jesus.

But, to send Rob to Africa takes years of specialised training, involves massive infrastructure and costs a huge amount of money.

However:



In terms of **effectiveness** – easily the most people that come to faith come through the witness of a friend – a colleague – a relative. Our Jerusalem is our low hanging fruit.

Street witnessing, door knocking – people do come to Christ – but far less.

Sending someone away or to a foreign culture and language drops the success rate even further.

There are cultural, racial, religious and political barriers.

Now, don't get me wrong. I am not saying just do Jerusalem evangelism.

We **do** need to pour prayer, money, people into **every** level.

We do need to make the investment to reach the world.

If we don't, there will be no churches there who can reach neighbours and family.

It is really hard – but once we plant a church in Kenya – then Kenyans can reach their neighbours.

The pattern is to plant churches – and then those churches pour a significant amount of resources into reaching their Jerusalem.

However, the reality is that all too often that is not what happens.

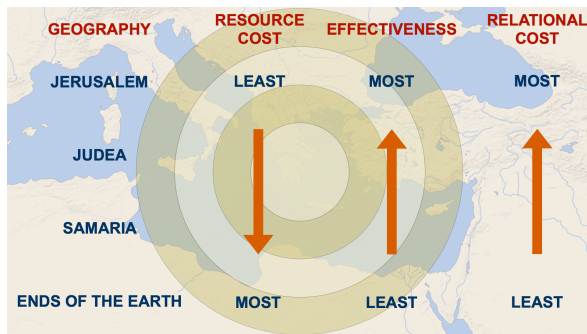
There are dozens of churches in Brisbane where the majority of their budget goes towards overseas missions.

They pray faithfully but do almost no local evangelism.

Even here, many of us give to missions and pray for missions – but hardly evangelise personally.

So – at the very place where evangelism is most cost effective and most productive – many Christians and churches struggle.

Why?



Because in terms of **relational cost** – reaching those we know well – who we have a relationship with – is incredibly difficult.

One of the hardest things we do is be a witness to those we know.

Fear of man, potential relational damage, ongoing effort.

These close our mouths.

I am not saying it is easy to be a missionary – far from it – but when you go to a land as a missionary, they expect you to share the gospel. You don't know them. You are a westerner. The relational cost is not as high.

But here is the result, it is hard to share with are those who we know and who know us – so all too often, we end up serving in church, giving, praying – telling ourselves that evangelism isn't our thing.

When we did short term missions in another country where people didn't know us and we would not see again – it was so much easier to share the gospel.

When we have to share with people we know – who may think we are fools – who may get offended – knowing we have to turn up to work with them tomorrow makes it hard.

But here is the thing.

The whole cycle fails if the church doesn't do its job at **every** level – and **especially** locally.

The most fruitful ministry of witness comes in our Jerusalem – those nearby.

The most converts in history have come from Christians sharing with those they know well.

But, there would be no local church there unless we go to Judea, Samaria and the nations.

Financial cost stops many Christians and churches supporting missions.

Relational cost stops even more sharing right there in their Jerusalem.

But we have to reach all of them.

Don't know where to start.

Here is where to start.



Jerusalem Opportunities

Invite someone to read **The Word One To One** With You.

This course works through the Gospel of John. This is one of the simplest and best courses.

Invite someone to come with you to **Come & See**.



You invite and we run it.

We have flyers where you can invite someone to our introductory course in February.

But here is the thing about **Come & See**.

Before you give them the **Come & See** flyer – I have a flyer for you:



Go & Invite

If you don't invite them – they don't come.

Pray for the boldness to ask someone.

All you need to do is invite them. You heard about this earlier and will hear more over the next week or so.

As well, if you are sitting there and thinking – this is the ministry for you to the point you may even take running it on – well Stephen is moving to Youth – so we would love someone who has this on their heart to take it over.



Another **Jerusalem Opportunity**.

Invite A Neighbour February.

Maybe you barely know your neighbours. Maybe it has been years since they ate with you.

Maybe they have no clue where you disappear to on Sunday.

Time to change all that.

We are asking you to invite a neighbour to Lunch or Dinner sometime in February.

The couple next door, the guy from work, the mum at the park.

This is not a high bar.

Then look for the opportunity to bring Jesus into the conversation.

If you don't get to speak about Jesus – invite them over again – and again – praying for those opportunities.

Tell them what you do on a Sunday. Tell them what Jesus did for you.

We are asking you to at least invite one neighbour or colleague or friend to dinner – with the aim of looking to share something of Christ.

Judea/Samaria Opportunities

Too hard to speak to someone you know?

Well, we have other opportunities for you.

You can go into the city evangelising with **OAC** and Andrew Walkington or with our **Church Network** – Matt Anderson.

Yes, you will speak to strangers.

Most will be Judea interactions – typical Aussie atheists you don't know personally.

But you may also meet Muslims, Hindus, Japanese atheists – all come to our city – Samaria type opportunities.

I will send an email out with the details for all of these opportunities.

Don't know which to choose? – fine try all five.

But we ask you to at least do one.

If you are too busy or too afraid – now is the time to pray.

Pray for opportunities and boldness.

So, what is **The Plan Of Our Mission?**



By witnessing to the nations.

One of the things we as Elders have to keep watching is that our church **priorities**, our church **budget**, our church **prayers**, our church **ministries** – are guided by this mandate.

Finally, we have:



1:9-11 The Period Of Our Mission

Acts 1:9–11:

After he had said this, he was taken up as they were watching, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going, they were gazing into heaven, and suddenly two men in white clothes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up into heaven? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, **will come** in the same way that you have seen him going into heaven.”

Jesus is taken to heaven on clouds – and will return on clouds.

In the Old Testament – the Son of Man approaches the Father on clouds to reign from heaven over His kingdom – Daniel 7.

And later He comes from heaven to earth on clouds to judge and save – and turn this world into His throne – Ezekiel 1.

Jesus has given us the mission and now He ascends to the Father and sits at His right hand to reign from heaven over His ever-growing kingdom.

You get the impression that the Disciples are stunned when Jesus left. They are just looking to the heavens.

What just happened?

What do we do now?

Peter didn't know what once before and to went back to fishing and took a few others with him.

Two angels appear and say – what are you doing looking up at the heavens?

You have your marching orders. Lower your eyes and get going.

He went **up** – He will send His Spirit **down** – so you can go **out**.

Up – down – out.

I think the angels would say to us – put your end times charts away – and get out there.

Stop fearing man – and get out there.

Stop saying you are too busy – and get out there.

Share the gospel, plant churches, send missionaries – that is where our energy should be.

And for good measure the angels then indicate **when** this command ends.

The Olivet Discourse and these angels tell us Jesus will return on the clouds at the very end of human history.

Jesus will come from heaven one last time to judge and finish the work of saving.

At that point – the time for evangelism and reaping into the kingdom will be past.

So – what is – **The Period Of Our Mission:**



Until He comes again.

In Matthew 24:14 – Jesus said:

This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed in all the world as a testimony to all nations, and **then** the end will come.

That is the plan.

The Spirit empowers us to go – person by person, church by church, nation by nation.

Today – has every nation been reached?

Clearly not – because the end hasn't come.

Are we close?

That depends on your charts and how you define nation.

But our job is not to argue over how close we are – our mission is to keep going into the nations until our King says – OK – now the last person has been reached.

If you are here this morning and you are not a Christian – **this** is certain – Jesus is coming back.

I don't know when – I know He will – and it may be close.

And when He returns the time to choose to accept Him as King is done. He returns in judgment.

If you want to know Him, know how to live for Him, know how to be filled with His Spirit – speak to those who brought you, those around you, one of the Pastors or come to **Come & See**.

Brothers and sisters who do love Jesus, I remind you that we are doing greater works than Jesus.

But the task is not done. Jesus saved us and filled us with His Spirit to be His witnesses.

So – are you willing to obey the King and mobilise for the mission? Or will you pretend His command doesn't exist?

How will you obey this mandate?

Who are you praying for and sharing with?

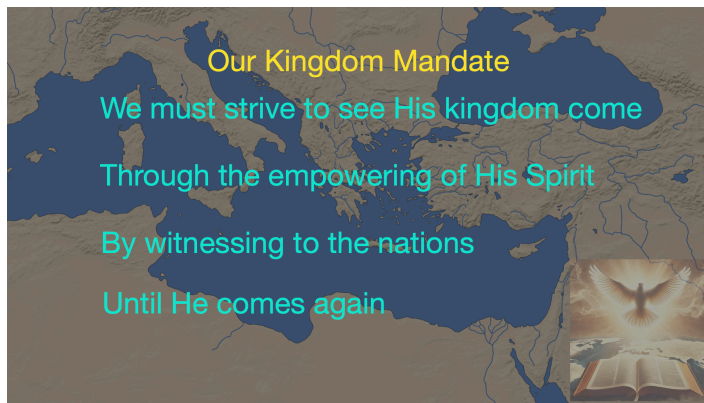
Which **Jerusalem/ Judea /Samaria** opportunity will you partake in?

How are you supporting overseas mission?

Does the glory of God cause you to long to see one more in the kingdom, one more church planted?

Do you believe Jesus can use you to reach the world?

Our Kingdom Mandate is clear:



We must strive to see His kingdom come, through the empowering of His Spirit, by witnessing to the nations, until He comes again.

Our Kingdom Mandate

Acts 1:4-11 (January 12, 2025)

Main Point: We must strive to see His kingdom come, through the empowering of His Spirit, by witnessing to the nations, until He comes again.

General Questions:

1. Why is being a witness for Christ – especially to those we know – so hard?
2. What do you understand the baptism of the Spirit to be?
3. Why did the Disciples think the next event on the divine calendar was a national kingdom for Israel? Was that a reasonable way to view the Old Testament prophecies?
4. Why do you think God didn't clearly outline the times and periods? Why do so many think we can still do this?
5. Is the end goal of eschatology (your doctrine of the end times) to understand the sequence and times or to have an urgency to share the gospel? Why?
6. Jesus is clear His kingdom is spiritual? So who do many still want to have a large national/political component to the kingdom? Why is this wrong.
7. How does this verse apply to us today?

We are to be witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

8. What does the Spirit empower us to do? Why is that necessary?
9. How do we know this mandate is still in effect today?

Application Questions:



1. Who can I be praying for?

2. What is stopping me being a witness?
3. Have I asked the Spirit to make me bold?
4. Which opportunities can I be involved in?

What convicted me in the message?

What moved me in the message?

What will I do in light of the message?