

PART 3

The
Mission
of Jesus

THE MISSION OF JESUS

EPISODE 1: PROCLAIMING GOOD NEWS

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Main Points

Here are the big ideas you want people to understand:

- A big part of Jesus' mission was to spread his message far and wide
- He described his message as "the word of the kingdom"
- We should work to spread the message of the kingdom broadly, even if in many cases it does not bear fruit
- As we spread the message of the kingdom, we are looking for people who *receive* the message and *bear fruit*

EXPLORING THE STORY

◀ Look Back

Start by giving the group a chance to share with one another. Then introduce the series and the lesson for this week.

1. One-up (or One-down)

Invite each person to share one thing that has happened over the past week that they are grateful for (or, they can share one thing that has been weighing on them)

2. Prayer

Have a time of prayer and thanksgiving based on what was shared

3. Review

Since this is the first session for *The Mission of Jesus* series, set the stage for where we're going:

“ **This week...** we're starting a series on *The Mission of Jesus*. Our goal over the next four weeks is to look at the Scriptures and gain a better understanding of what Jesus worked to accomplish during his earthly ministry. This is the same work his followers are called to do. Off the top of your head, what would you say Jesus worked to accomplish as he traveled around?

▲ Look Up

Now that you've introduced the series, shift to this week's episode.

4. Setting the Stage

“ Jesus began his work by traveling around and speaking publicly in towns and villages. Sometimes he taught in synagogues (religious houses of worship) but more often he simply focused on spreading the message about God's kingdom. He proclaimed (announced) what he called "the word of the kingdom" to crowds and individuals – anyone who would listen!

As we read the story, be thinking about this:

- How does this story help us understand the work of Jesus?

5. Read **Matthew 13.1-23** and then discuss:

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- Retell the story in your own words. What happened that day?
 - What are some details you notice in this story?
 - What does the sower represent? The seed? The soil?
 - What did Jesus call his message? (vs. 19)
 - What are the enemies, the things that prevent the seed from taking root and bearing fruit in a person's life?
 - What surprises you about this story? What questions do you have?
 - How do you think Jesus wanted his listeners to respond that day? What does it mean to bear fruit?

► Look Ahead

Help people process the implications of this week's reading and how they should apply its truths to the way they think and live.

6. Implications and Applications

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- What did today's story teach us about Jesus' mission?
 - What do you need to do to join Jesus in his work of spreading the message of the kingdom?
 - What is one step you will take this week to get started?

7. Closing Prayer