





ACTS:

The Gospel's Spirit-Empowered Journey

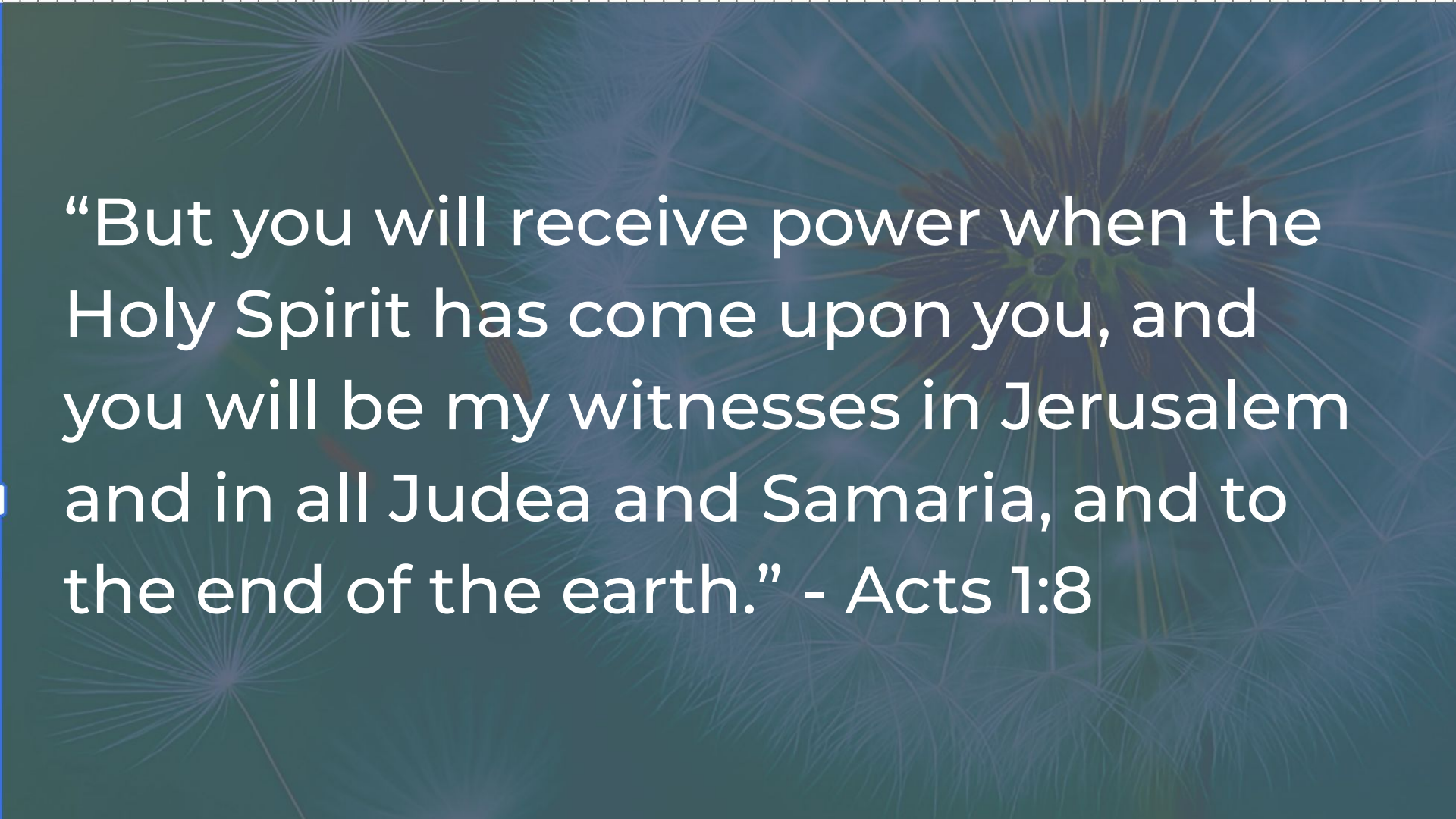
Haverim | Fall 2025 - Spring 2026

Paul's First Missionary Journey

**Acts 13 &
14**

Today's Outline

- 1. Overview of Acts 13 & 14: Paul's First Missionary Journey**
- 2. How to Have "Good News Conversations"**
- 3. Takeaways**



“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” - Acts 1:8

Turning Point in Acts

- Acts 1-12
 - Central Leader: Peter
 - Gospel Focus: Jewish People
- Acts 13 and beyond
 - Central Leader: Saul (Paul)
 - Gospel Focus: Gentiles

Acts Chapters 13 & 14

- **Overall Time Period:** 44-48 AD
- **Central Location:** Antioch in Syria
- **Big Event:** Paul's First Missionary Journey
- **Length of Time Covered in Acts 13-14:**
 - 1 ½ - 2 years

“The gospel is the good news of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, and that through faith in him you can be forgiven of your sins, filled with the Holy Spirit and reconciled to God.”

--Alex Kennedy, Kenny Kline

Paul's First Missionary Journey



Source: <https://tinyurl.com/4dxh9j2m>

The Sending Church: Antioch in Syria

- Diverse, Spirit-filled community of prophets and teachers
- Holy Spirit sets apart Barnabas and Saul
- Church commissions them with prayer and fasting
- First intentional missionaries sent



St. Peter's Cave Church, Antioch in Syria

THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF PAUL

ACTS 13:4-14:28

- City
- ← Paul's routes
- Via Sebaste



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Cyprus (Salamis & Paphos)

- Saul & Barnabas sail from the port city of Seleucia to the island of Cyprus
- Salamis: Preached in Jewish synagogues
- Paphos: encounter with Elymas the magician and Sergius Paulus
- Saul now called Paul



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Perga in Pamphylia

- John Mark departs for Jerusalem
- Paul and Barnabas travel 100 miles north along the Via Sebaste to Antioch in Pisidia



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Antioch in Pisidia

- Paul preached in the synagogue
- Jews rejected the message, but the Gentiles believed
- Mission focus now to the Gentiles
- Jewish leaders expel Paul and Barnabas



Source: <https://tinyurl.com/yfzcpmax>

Roman shops on the Decumanus Maximus, Antioch in Pisidia

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Iconium

- Many Jews and Greeks believe
- The city is divided and opposition arises
- Paul and Barnabas stay and speak boldly and perform signs and wonders
- Paul and Barnabas eventually flee when threatened to be stoned



*THE FIRST MISSIONARY
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Lystra

- Paul heals crippled man
- Pagan locals call Barnabas Zeus and Paul Hermes
- Paul appeals to natural revelation
- Jews from Antioch in Pisidia and Iconium stir up the crowd and stone Paul



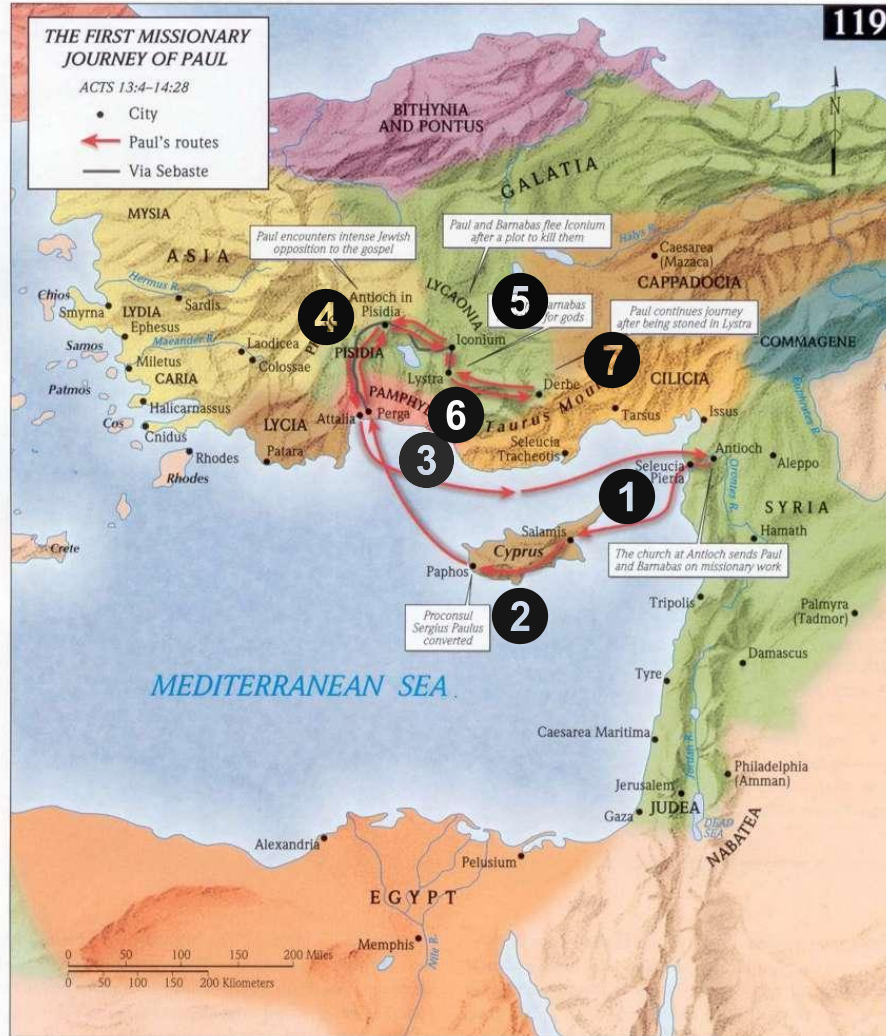
Source: <https://tinyurl.com/bdh52fe2>

Paul & Barnabas in Lystra by Johann Heiss (1678)

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Derbe

- Paul and Barnabas preached and made many disciples
- Quiet fruitfulness after persecution



Source: <https://tinyurl.com/emxw92wy>

Ancient religious structure excavation in Derbe

The Return Trip

- Retraced route: Lystra to Iconium to Antioch in Pisidia
- Appointed elders in every church
- Encouraged believers
- Returned to Antioch in Syria and reported all that God had done



Paul & Barnabas, Acts 14:27

How to Have Good News Conversations

“If someone asks about
your hope as a believer,
always be ready to
explain it.”

--1 Peter 3:15 (NLT)

Good News Conversation

When I share with others
the story of God's grace in
my life

- What was a time in your life when the Lord Jesus was clearly the one who got you through?
- Joy follows Jesus--when has knowing Jesus filled you with joy?

Information about the Audience

- What have I learned about them from previous interaction?
- What do I know about their story?

Category	Acts 13 – Antioch in Pisidia	Acts 14 – Lystra	A Frequently Seen Acquaintance
Information about Audience/ person	Primarily Jews and God-fearing Gentiles in the synagogue (Acts 13:14–16).	Gentile pagans, worshipers of Greek gods, in a public setting (Acts 14:8–13)	Grew up with a knowledge of God; family was a part of a church; went to parochial school; has experienced much loss; seems to be always searching; open to my questions
Conversation Setting	Synagogue on the Sabbath where Scripture was read (Acts 13:14–15).	Marketplace or open area where Paul healed a crippled man (Acts 14:8–10)	
Common Ground	Began with Israel's history — Abraham, Moses, David (Acts 13:17–23).	Began with creation and nature — pointing to the living God who created all things (Acts 14:15–17)	

Conversation Setting

- Wherever we will connect
- Often most effective one-on-one

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Conversation Setting	Synagogue on the Sabbath where Scripture was read (Acts 13:14–15).	Marketplace or open area where Paul healed a crippled man (Acts 14:8–10)	My hair appointments in a one-chair salon
Common Ground	Began with Israel’s history — Abraham, Moses, David(Acts 13:17–23).	Began with creation and nature — pointing to the living God who created all things (Acts 14:15–17)	

Common Ground

- Where do our stories overlap?
- Gracious curiosity and active listening
- How do I convey interest in their story?

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Common Ground	Began with Israel's history — Abraham, Moses, David (Acts 13:17–23).	Began with creation and nature — pointing to the living God who created all things (Acts 14:15–17)	We both have lost our dads and other close family members

Truth about God

- Foundational truth-- “basic”
- What is a truth about God that I have personally experienced through a season of struggle?

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Truth about God	- God's faithfulness to Israel through history (13:17–22); other examples: Acts 13:23; Acts 13:24-25; Acts 13:27-37; Acts 13:38-39	- God is the Creator and Sustainer, not one of many gods (14:15); Other examples: Acts 14:17; Acts 14:15;	You are loved by God; He does not leave you or forsake you
Scripture to Share/ Motivating Scripture	Heavy use of Old Testament references: - Psalm 2:7 (Acts 13:33) - Isaiah 55:3 (Acts 13:34) - Psalm 16:10 (Acts 13:35)	No Scripture quoted. Paul used natural revelation (creation) as a witness to God's truth (this principle is found in Psalm 19) (Acts 14:15–17)	
Bottom Line in the Conversation	The fulfillment of God's promises in Jesus Christ and justification by faith	The revelation of the true Creator to idol-worshiping Gentiles and a call to turn from false gods	

Scripture to Share/ Motivating Scripture

- Do we share a “Bible environment/experience”? A specific Scripture may be helpful
- Is my friend new to conversations about God?

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Bottom Line in the Conversation

- What is the picture of Jesus that I am leaving with this person?
- How does the Father want me to show His love to His beloved image-bearer?

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Bottom Line in the Conversation	The fulfillment of God's promises in Jesus Christ and justification by faith	The revelation of the true Creator to idol-worshiping Gentiles and a call to turn from false gods	Jesus is pursuing you

Takeaways



The Great Commission:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”

-Matthew 28:19a

3 Takeaways

1. The Holy Spirit directs the mission.
2. The Word of God bears fruit despite opposition.
3. The Gospel is contextualized.

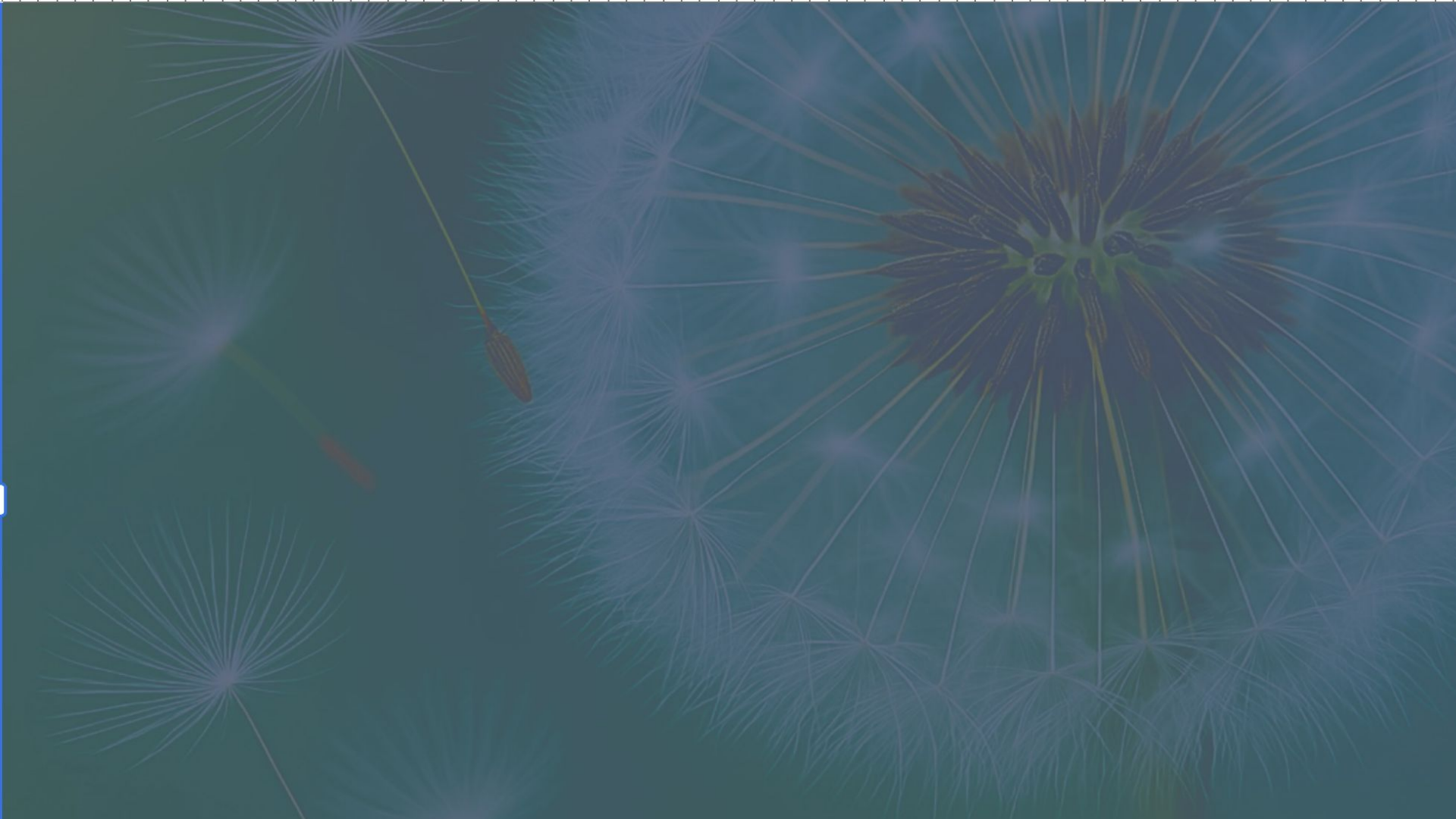
Bottom Line

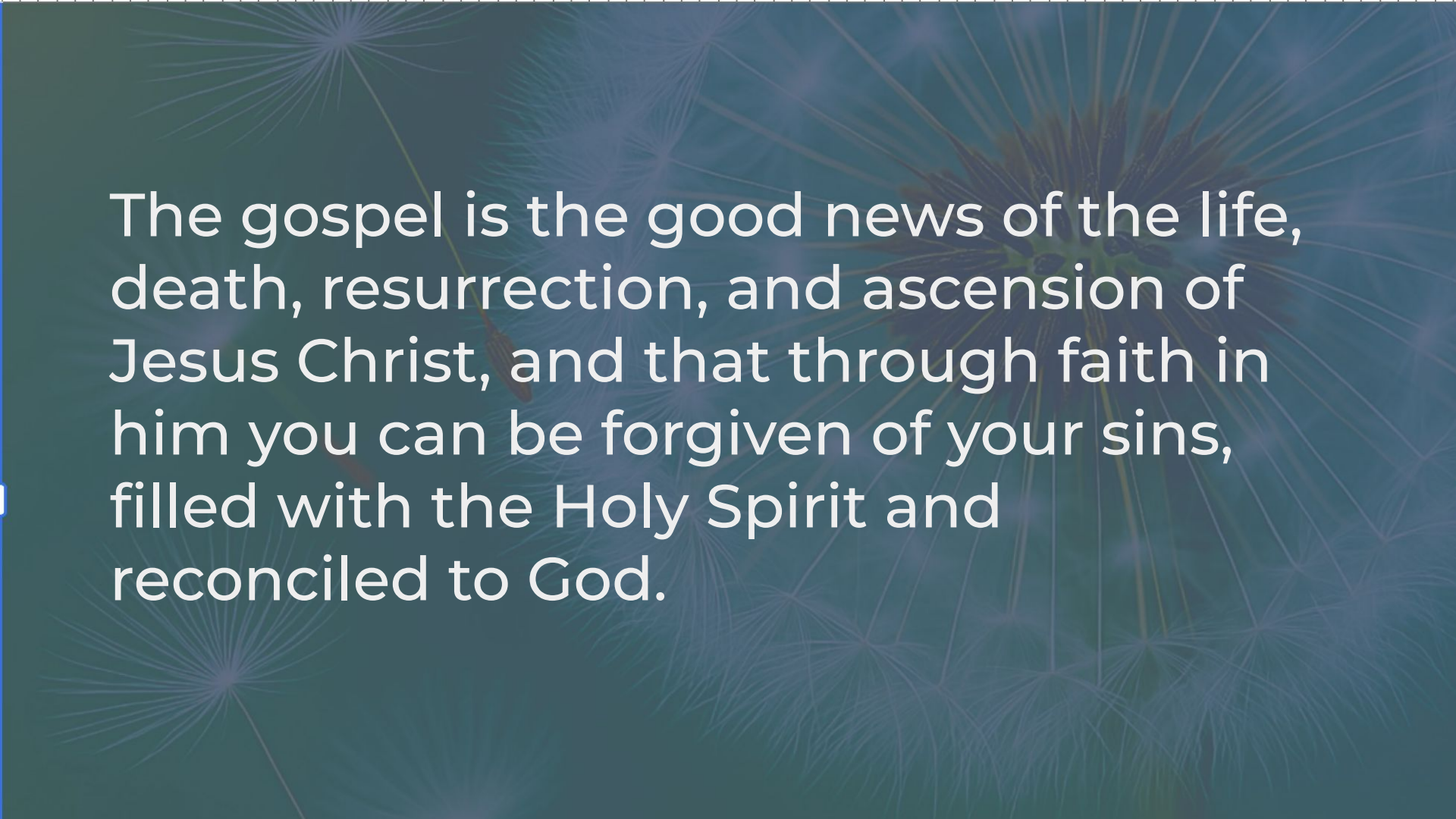
Paul's example teaches us that the Gospel message never changes, but our approach to sharing the Gospel must be Holy Spirit-led and audience-aware.



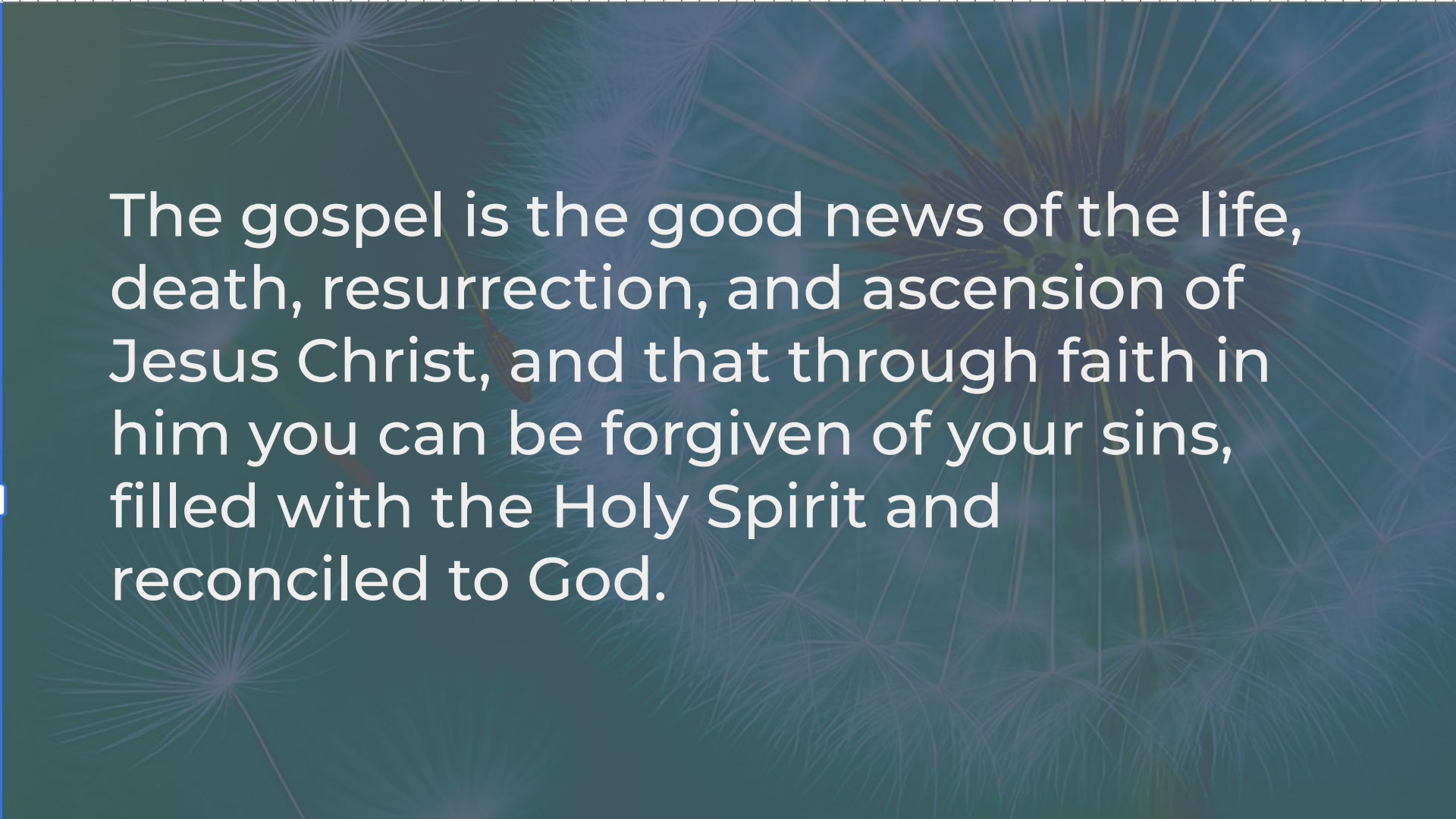
Weekly Challenge:

Take time to pray and ask the Holy Spirit, “Who have You put in my path to have a Good News conversation with?”

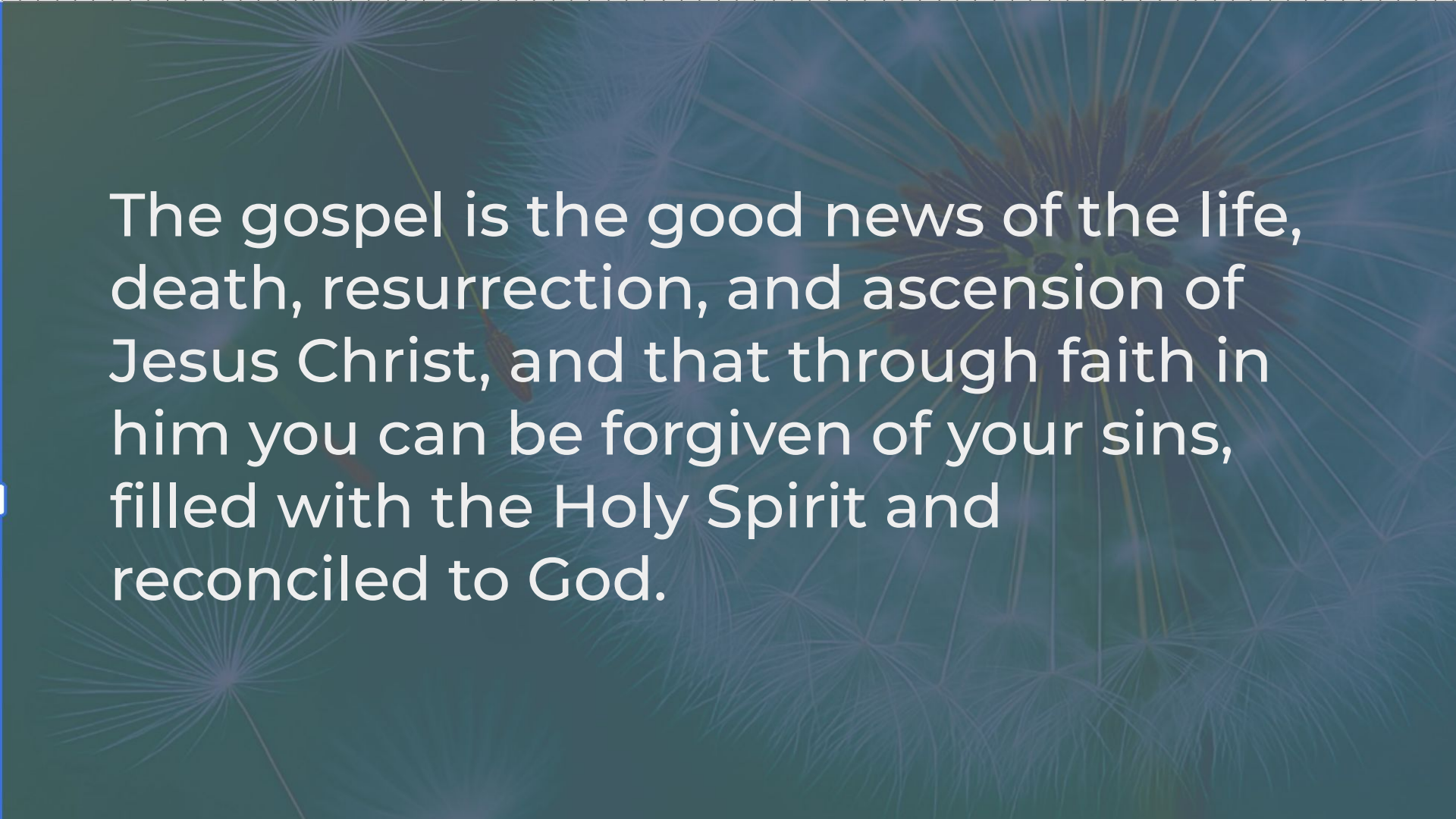




The gospel is the good news of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, and that through faith in him you can be forgiven of your sins, filled with the Holy Spirit and reconciled to God.

The background of the slide features several dandelion seed heads in various stages of dispersal, set against a dark blue, textured background. The seed heads are light-colored, possibly white or pale yellow, and their fine, feathery seeds are visible. One seed head is prominently in the upper right, while others are scattered across the frame, some appearing as soft, out-of-focus shapes. The overall lighting is dim, creating a serene and contemplative atmosphere.

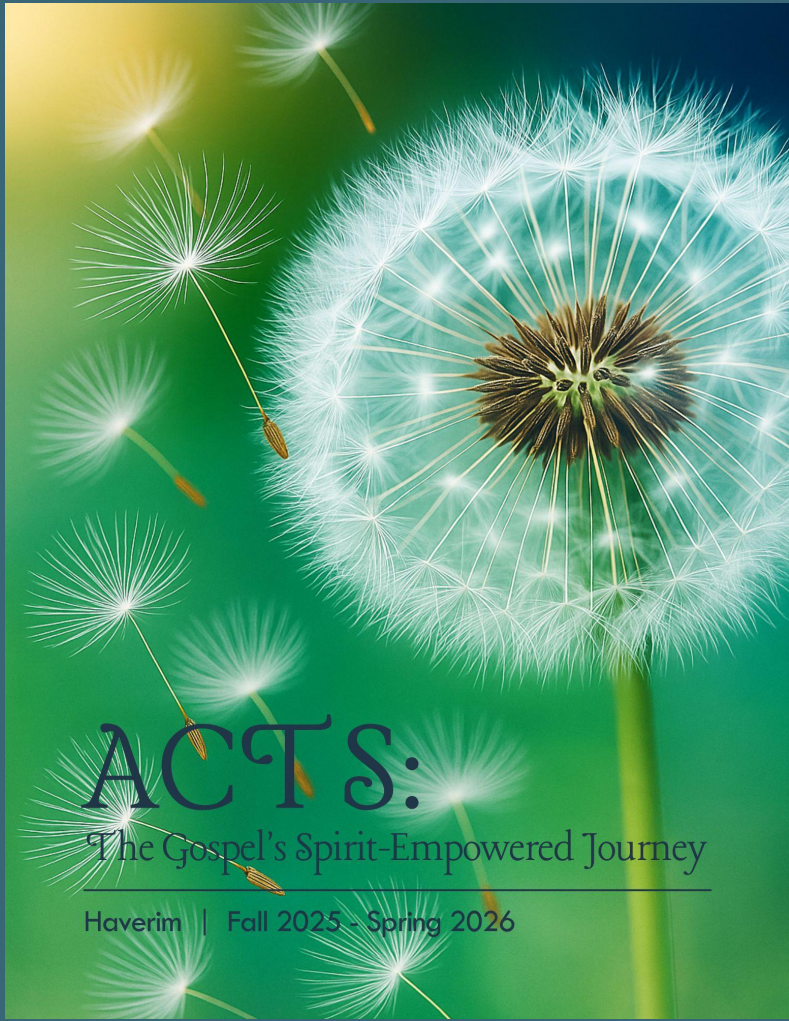
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