

Explore It

FOR LEADERS

SESSION
02

HOPE IN JESUS BRINGS ME ENCOURAGEMENT

 **Matthew 10** – Jesus sends out the twelve

Please refer to the Introduction document for more details

Start it

Explain to the children that you are going to play a game. Pair each child on the call with another child and ask them to think about one nice thing about their partner (this can be their character, what they are wearing etc.). Choose each child in turn to share. If children are struggling, share an example. E.g. 'I like you Sarah because you smile a lot and your T shirt is really cool!'

● **Say:** How did everyone feel about people saying nice things about you? I hope you felt encouraged by hearing positive things about you.

Give time for response and discussion.

● **Say:** At the moment we have to live our lives in a way that is very different to what we have known: for example, having to learn at home and not school, not being able to go to the park to meet friends, not being able to visit family. There have been so many changes that are unsettling and can make us feel sad or worried. It is important to know that Jesus brings us hope and that if we do things to encourage each other we are sharing that hope with everyone else.

In our story today we will see how Jesus, having chosen his closest twelve friends, sends them out to encourage people and bring them hope. They do this by healing people, raising people from the dead and driving out demons. This is big stuff, but it is not only all the big things that bring encouragement, the story also teaches us that even the small actions of someone can be encouraging and bring hope.

Sing It

Sing 'My Hope Is in The Lord' together.

Lyrics version – <https://youtu.be/T0hxlgV2tgI>

Lyrics and actions – <https://youtu.be/tJePCzTaQo4>

Tell It

Leader's note: Before starting today's session you will need to download the story and the notes in the format you prefer to work with.

Follow this link: <http://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/disciples-mission>

and you will have three options to choose:

- i) View slideshow
- ii) Download the image set (PDF, PowerPoint, Keynote or JPEGs)
- iii) Story planner

🗨️ **Say:** We are going to share today's story and as I tell the story you can see the pictures on the screen that will help you imagine what was happening.

Share your screen and tell the story.

🗨️ **Say:** This would have been an exciting time for the disciples, because after spending so much time learning from Jesus, they finally got to help with some of his work. It would have been quite an adventure and maybe a little dangerous. Can you imagine going on a trip without having enough clothes, money, or even a place to stay?

🗨️ **Allow** time for responses.

Say: Jesus wanted the disciples to trust God in all their work. They were telling people good news about Jesus and they were doing good things for others to prove the message was true. They were bringing hope to the people of Israel.

Action It

🗨️ **Say:** We are all disciples of Jesus. We are now the people who need to take the hope of Jesus to everyone. It is a bit difficult at the moment because we can't just go up to people and help them, we have to keep our distance. But we can still spread hope and encouragement, we just have to think a bit more creatively about how to do it!

Read the last verse of the Bible story:

'Whoever helps one of these little ones because they are my followers will truly get his reward. He will get his reward even if he only gave my follower a cup of cold water.'

(International Children's Bible)

🗨️ **Say:** This verse is telling us that it is important to do even the things that seem very small. We can still be like Jesus in the little ways. Let's think about the small ways this week we can encourage someone and give them hope. Maybe it's someone in your family, or in your street, or in your school.

Share a white board and ask the children to write or draw some ideas of how we can do this.

Pray It

🗨️ **Say:** Let's pray together.

As I play the song again, 'My Hope Is in The Lord', close your eyes and think about the one thing you will do this week that will encourage you, that will give you hope but will also encourage someone else and give them hope.

Explore It

Remember to share the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.

Explore It FOR ME

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Here are some ideas and activities you could do on your own



Hear

Listen to a piece of music that encourages you, that gives you a smile, that reminds you to be hopeful. You could dance to it and /or sing along to it... and maybe get a member of your family involved too!



Write

Write a poem that tells about Jesus giving us hope or a poem that could encourage someone who may be struggling just now. This could be for a teacher to encourage them in all they are doing in these difficult times, or for a grandparent who is missing you.



Sense

Collect some leaves and see how different they are. Then you can either:

- ➡ Paint them very gently and print them onto paper. See the different shapes they make.
- ➡ Take two pieces of plain old fabric (an old white pillowcase would work, cut in half). Lay the leaves on one side and cover over with the second piece of fabric. Then carefully, using a mallet, bash the leaves hard. Open up the fabric and pick off the squished leaves. You'll see the imprint of them on the fabric. The picture won't last forever but it captures the beauty.



Share

Try and encourage someone this week. Here are some ideas:

- ➡ Call / Facetime / WhatsApp / Message some friends to check how they are doing. Can you do this for twelve different friends?
- ➡ Do some extra things at home to help your family.



Pray

Write a prayer for a neighbour to encourage them and post it through their letterbox.



Play

Take part in a Joe Wicks morning exercise session (search 'PE With Joe' on YouTube) and listen to how encouraging he is. What one encouraging thing can you say to yourself each day?

KIDS ALIVE ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic - is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!



Explore It TOGETHER

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Here are some ideas and activities you could do as a family



Write

Choose twelve people who may need encouraging at this time; people who need to know in these difficult times that there is hope of things getting better. Maybe these could be twelve neighbours. Write a little note to each of them and post them through their doors or, for people further afield, send them a video message from your family. You might want to include a Bible verse too.



Create

Create a piece of art together. Choose items from your garden, or from your kitchen, or general craft materials. Create a picture of somewhere you would like to go once you are able to go out again or somewhere you would love Jesus to have sent you to meet other people.



Share

Shop for a neighbour without them asking you. Choose a few things you think they would like, maybe a treat or something you know they need. Drop it round to them with an encouraging note to let them know you are thinking about them.



Sense

Go for a walk together but take with you some different coloured lengths of wool, about ten each. As you walk, each find a stick and tie a piece of wool to it. Whenever you find something interesting, use the wool to wind it onto your stick as a reminder of your journey. At the end of your walk you will have a multi coloured stick. You can then share with each other the items on your journey stick and encourage each other when others tell you about the things they have chosen.



Bake

Make some cookies and decorate them to share them with a neighbour. Leave a note with them to encourage them and to let them know you are thinking of them.



Hear

Choose a song that encourages your family and have a fun five minutes dancing together.