

## Part 1: THE CHURCH – GATHERED AND SCATTERED

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

### Matthew 11:28

*'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.'*

### Matthew 28:18-20

*'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'*

### Acts 15:19

*'... we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.'*

Jesus said, '**Come** to me...' and then, '**Go** and make disciples...'. But, if we are honest, we may have to admit that it is much easier for us to **go** to church and, occasionally (when we feel completely confident that this is not going to be an embarrassing service with weird things going on), to invite a friend, saying, 'Why don't you **come** with me?'

After Jesus' resurrection he told his disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for 'the promise of the Father' (Acts 1:4). 'You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit', he assured them, 'not many days from now' (Acts 1:5). And then, 'When the day of Pentecost had come,' (Acts 2:1) they went – filled with the Spirit, out onto the city streets!

As the church grew and began to reach people of other nationalities, they became aware that some Jewish cultural practices made it hard for Gentiles (the Greek world is *ethnoi* – or as we would say, 'people of other ethnicities') to fit into the church and feel at home there, so they made some changes in order to become more inclusive.

- *What difference would it make if we truly believed that God isn't so much in the business of sending lost people to the church, but that rather, he first wants to send the church into a lost world?*
- *What might it mean if we took seriously the call to 'go'? How best might we make a difference in our community? What needs transforming?*
- *What might it look like to take the kingdom out into the world?*
- *Does 'go' necessarily mean that I must change my location? What else might it mean?*
- *What might we need to change for our gathered church services to be more accessible and meaningful to people who are not Christians – or at least, not yet?*
- *How might we reposition the church to reach the city?*