

## Opener

Try to encourage everyone to briefly answer the following questions: Do you know what your Christian name means? Do you like it as a name? Do you think it suits you?

## Worship

Jesus is given the title *the Alpha and the Omega* in the New Testament. These were the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, and the title is a reminder to us of his all-encompassing Kingdom and rule.

*Read Revelation 1:8, Revelation 21:6 and Colossians 1:15-18*

Meditate for a minute on the breadth and completeness of Jesus' power. He created the first atom, the first ray of light, He set the clock of time ticking. He is Lord of everything we can see, master of every spiritual power and the King of heaven and earth. He always sees the end from the beginning and nothing is hidden from his sight.

*Now read Isaiah 43:1*

Take a couple of minutes to offer prayers of praise.

## Bible Study

Read Acts 1:1-11 and discuss together:

- Why does Luke talk about what Jesus "*began to do and teach*"? Did He somehow leave his work unfinished?
- What hints are there in the first five verses about the purpose(s) of the forty days that Jesus spent with his disciples after his resurrection? (You might want to read Luke 24:44-49 as well.)
- Some of the disciples still expected Jesus to establish a political kingdom, overthrowing the Roman occupation and re-establishing Jewish autonomy. What does Jesus' reply tell us about the true nature of his Kingdom? He thought it unimportant for the disciples to know exactly *when* He would return and fully establish his Kingdom, and yet He sent angels to reassure them that it was definitely going to happen – why do you think that is?
- Why were they instructed to wait in Jerusalem? What role was the Holy Spirit to have in the life and mission of the newly inaugurated church? Do you think that we place the same emphasis today on needing the power of the Holy Spirit before we start serving God?
- The Son of God became a man when He came to earth, but He didn't stop being a man when He returned to heaven. He ascended as a human being and sits on the throne of the universe as a human being. How do these facts affect your faith or the way you relate to Jesus?

## Reflection and Prayer

In two's or three's discuss together:

- Where is your own personal Jerusalem, the closest circle of people who you would want to witness to about Jesus?
- How about your Judea, your wider circle of contacts and connections, how do you go about sharing your faith with them?
- Are you aware of a personal Samaria – people whose paths cross yours who are different to you culturally or socially? Are you able to break through such barriers and show God's love to these?
- What is your role in taking the gospel to the ends of the earth? Are you involved in supporting mission in its wider context?

Turn your thoughts and discussions to prayer.