



**Sermon Discussion Guide: expand nationwide**

**Series:** *here, there, everywhere: following the Spirit's lead*

**Date:** 05/03/2026

**Scripture:** Acts 1:1-8 (New Revised Standard Version updated edition)

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## Opening Prayer

Holy Spirit, widen our concern. Stretch our hearts beyond what is familiar, comfortable, and convenient. Help us see the wider community we share and give us courage to show up with love, humility, and faithfulness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Introduction & Context

Jesus tells the disciples that their witness will begin in Jerusalem, but it will not stay there. It will move outward into Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. This week's message focused on Judea: the next ring out, the wider community beyond our immediate routine but not beyond our responsibility. When the disciples ask about restoring the kingdom to Israel, Jesus does not shrink the vision down to their narrow frame. He widens the map. In the same way, the Spirit still widens our concern, helping us care about more than what is nearest or easiest.

## Discussion Questions

### A Small World

1. The sermon suggested that most of us do not actually live in the whole world, but in our version of it. Where does your world tend to stay small? What makes it easy to focus only on what is right in front of you?
2. How does starting in "Jerusalem" help ground discipleship in real life? Why is that a good place to begin, but not a good place to stop?



### **Identifying Our Judea**

1. In Acts 1:8, Jesus names Judea as the next circle beyond Jerusalem. What do you think “Judea” looks like in your life right now? What wider community are you already part of but may not think about often?
2. The sermon described Judea as “close enough to matter and far enough to ignore.” Why do you think that is true? What kinds of needs, people, or opportunities are easiest for you to overlook?

### **When Jesus Widens the Map**

1. The disciples ask Jesus whether this is the time to restore the kingdom to Israel. What does their question reveal about the size of their concern? How does Jesus’ answer widen their imagination?
2. Have there been moments in your life when God widened your map—through travel, service, mission, relationships, or hardship? What changed in you because of that experience?

### **The Spirit Widens Our Concern**

1. The sermon said, “The Spirit widens our concern.” What does that mean to you? How is concern different from guilt, obligation, or trying to fix everything?
2. What are some signs that the love of Jesus is making your life larger—not busier or more impressive, but larger in compassion, awareness, and responsibility?

### **Witness, Not Nationalism**

1. The message warned against confusing Christian witness with nationalism or jingoism. Why is that distinction important? What is the difference between serving the wider community in Jesus’ name and trying to baptize patriotism?
2. The sermon said, “Nationalism gives you slogans and enemies. Witness gives you neighbors to serve.” Where do you see that tension playing out in real life? What might faithful witness look like instead?



## **Closing Prayer**

God of grace, thank You for meeting us where we are and for refusing to leave us there. Widen our concern. Teach us to care about the larger life we share. Keep us from shrinking faith down to what is easiest or most familiar, and make us faithful witnesses in the places just beyond our usual view. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **Key Takeaway**

The Spirit does not only comfort us where we are. The Spirit widens our concern, teaching us to care about the wider community we share and to take one faithful step beyond our usual routine.

## **P.A.R.**

### **Pray:**

Holy Spirit, widen my concern. Stretch my heart beyond what is familiar, comfortable, and convenient. Help me see the wider community I share and give me courage to take one faithful step this week.

### **Act:**

Take one **Judea step** this week: show up to serve, encourage, or participate in something that blesses the community beyond your usual routine.

### **Reflect:**

Where did I notice the Spirit widening my concern this week? What part of the wider community did I see more clearly? What might my next faithful step be?

If you want, I can also rerun the full guide with this section dropped in so you have a clean final version.

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