

Pentecost Escape Room

A series of challenges and puzzles for youth groups exploring the disciples' perspective of the events after the resurrection, from the road to Emmaus to Pentecost.

In an escape room, a group works together to complete a series of challenges to receive further clues, which will ultimately allow them to get a code to unlock the door and 'escape the room'.

Present this as a timed challenge (escape in one hour or less) if you feel the young people would deal well with the pressure. The challenges work best when taken on as a team (at least three young people), but it can be hard for more than 10 to meaningfully work together. For a much larger group, have smaller teams 'race' against each other (this will require another room and duplicate resources).



ESCAPE ROOM

Essential planning

You will need a youth leader to be in costume acting as one of Jesus' early disciples. They will be in the escape room with the young people, facilitating and setting the scene. This leader should follow the **Leader's script** which includes some lines to say at the start of each stage, instructions on how to direct the young people, and additional hints and help to give the group for each challenge if they are stuck or taking too long. The goal is for the young people to problem-solve and grapple with the challenges themselves, but sometimes they will need a nudge in the right direction.

There are three stages and eight challenges in total.

Each stage focuses on a Bible passage. It may be that some of your young people know their Bible so well that they already know the answers. If so, encourage them to still try and work through the clues to confirm their response. There will be a Bible available in the room, but reading it will provide the answers straight away, so it's best if the young people work through the challenges and then read the passage after they have completed each stage, as instructed, to confirm their answers.

Stage 1 explores the story on the road to Emmaus and consists of four challenges that can be done sequentially or simultaneously.

Stage 2 explores Jesus appearing to the disciples in the upper room, when they were waiting for the Holy Spirit. There are two sequential challenges.

Stage 3 explores the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost and the disciples sharing the good news with people from many nations. It involves two sequential challenges.

After completing **Stage 3**, the group escapes from the room, just like the disciples leaving the upper room at Pentecost, filled with the Holy Spirit and ready to share the good news about Jesus.

You will need to print out and place all of the challenges for each stage in a 'stage envelope'. The envelope for **Stage 1** is left on the table to be found when the group enters the room. The envelopes for **Stages 2** and **3** should be kept by the youth leader and given out upon completion of the previous stage.

What to print out and gather

- Print out the 5 Challenge sheets, map and three Congratulations certificates.
- Create the three stage envelopes with the Challenge sheets inside:

Stage 1 – Challenges 1-4

Stage 2 – Challenges 5-6

Stage 3 – Challenges 7-8

- Gather props and resources (see **You will need**).
- Set up your room and hide clues (see **Set up your room**).
- We have provided the answers to each challenge in an Answers sheet at the very end of this resource, to print out.
- We have provided scripts to be used by the youth leader. Print out these pages and make sure the leader has read them beforehand. Keep the scripts hidden from your group.

You will need

- A costume for the youth leader to be a first-century disciple (e.g. tea towel on the head, dressing gown, head scarf, etc).
- Some Bibles, stacked out of the way (hide the 'lock' clue inside one).
- A table and at least one chair, or enough chairs for the young people to sit at the table (hide a clue under a chair).
- Pens to write down the answers.
- A large packet of sweets to share (or your tuck shop in the room – see **The Lock** section below for details).
- A reward – for completing the escape room, e.g. hot chocolate or sweets.
- For Challenge 2, provide slips of paper with the following words:
i) MALCUS ii) COSOPAM iii) SOLOMON iv) CLEOPAS v) ILEOPIM
- The objects required for Challenge 6 (at your discretion) see preparation details in **Set up your room** below: sticky notes, paper, pens, balloons, mirror/window, torches/LED tealights, lemon juice, cotton buds.

Set up your room

Depending on your venue, try to create a space reminiscent of the room where the disciples were meeting in Luke 24. You want a room with one door – that you can lock, or pretend to lock (see **The Lock** section below).

Set out the **Stage 1** envelope on the table. This should include printouts of **Challenges 1-4**.

Preparation for **Challenge 6** You need to hide the answers to this challenge in advance. There are four methods to 'hide' the answers for the group to discover. The methods reflect different aspects of the Holy Spirit: breath, fire/light, wind. You can use all four methods and spread the answers out, or just one method – depending on your group size or how long they have for the task.

Method 1: Fingerprints and breath on glass Write the answers with your fingers on some form of glass – a window in the room; a mirror or mirror cards on the table; or on a glass item which can be placed on the table.

Leave a pointer or clue as to the location of your writing – a sticky note with the words 'Challenge 6. As the Holy Spirit breathes on me, I will reveal my answers' and an arrow by your writing.

Method 2: Lemon juice as invisible ink Mix some lemon juice with a few drops of water and use a cotton bud to write out answers on a sheet(s) of paper left in view.

Leave a sticky note by the paper saying, 'Challenge 6. As the Holy Spirit shines on me, I will reveal my answers.'

Provide LED tealights or small torches for the group to use. The light applied behind the paper should reveal the 'invisible ink' writing.

Method 3: Notes inside balloons Write the answers on small pieces of paper and roll up to fit inside some balloons, then blow up and tie off the balloons. Have the balloons in the room as part of the overall setting. You can have several extras without clues in to make it more fun. On the table, leave out something safe to pop the balloons with, e.g. pencil or knitting needle.

Leave a note with the clue: 'Challenge 6. The answers are bursting to pop out at you!'

Method 4: Writing on paper airplanes Fold up paper airplanes and then write an answer on the folded planes so the letters are across the folds. Unfold the planes and leave the papers out flat, so the letters are then randomly on the page. To make it easier, you could put dotted lines along the fold lines. Put a sticky note by the paper saying, 'Challenge 6, When I can fly on the wind, I will show an answer!'

If you use **Methods 1, 2** or **4**, do a trial run, to make sure they work well before leaving them for the group to discover.

Include the following countries from Acts 2: **Parthia, Elam, Pontus, Asia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete.**

The Lock

Ideally use a 4-digit combination padlock. You could place the lock on a chain across the door or simply between two chairs in front of the door to symbolise being locked in. (Make sure it's safe and you can escape in case of a fire, and keep in mind access needs.)

If you do not have a padlock, you could have the four digits as a PIN on a mobile phone, so that when they enter the correct code there is a message on the screen saying 'CONGRATULATIONS – You have escaped'. (This may break the 'illusion' of being the disciples in Bible times, but it is a cost-effective way of ending the challenge.)

In either case, write each of the four digits of the code in large clear writing on separate sticky notes and hide them in the following four places around the room:

Digit 1 of your code: *Inside a Bible, probably the front or back cover.*

Digit 2 of your code: *Either in your tuck shop or under a bag of sweets. The clue is 'I love sweets'.*

Digit 3 of your code: *Stuck to a mobile phone – this could be left out or in the youth leader's possession.*

Digit 4 of your code: *Under a chair – you may need sticky tape to secure it.*



Stage 1

Leader's script

Set the scene

Meet the young people and lead them into the room you have set up. Make sure everyone has been to the toilet beforehand, as they cannot get out of the room until they complete all the tasks. Once they are inside, the youth leader (dressed as a disciple) makes a big show of locking the door with a padlock and chains.

Say: 'We're safe in here in the upper room. My name is Martha/Zacheus (or other name of your choice). I'm one of Jesus' disciples too. As you know, the followers of Jesus are in hiding. Jesus died less than a week ago, and we are just not sure it's safe to go out there. The Romans and the Jewish leaders might be after us. The thing is, some people say they have seen Jesus alive! It might sound crazy, but I remember Jesus saying he would rise again. Do you think it's possible? It's just hard to believe when you're so scared. I keep thinking that Jesus would tell us not to be afraid, but we have several challenges to complete to help us build up the courage to leave this room. Will you help?'

Point out or let them find the **Stage 1** envelope (in plain sight on the table) which will include **Challenge sheets 1-4**. These can be completed simultaneously or in sequence, but all four must be completed correctly before **Stage 1** is passed.

Challenge 1 Later clues to be introduced if necessary:

1. **'They've just confirmed that the sun was in their eyes as they were talking, but was setting behind them as they returned back to Jerusalem.'**
2. **'They've recalled that the village had a girl's name at the start.'** There are several options (Emma, Beth, Sam, Ana, Jeri) but only one fits with other clues.

Challenge 2 Later clues to be introduced if necessary:

1. Options for the name, to be released when they have several letters to choose from...
i) MALCUS ii) COSOPAM iii) SOLOMON iv) CLEOPAS v) ILEOPIM
2. You can remind the group that letters they have are in order of the spelling for the traveller's name.

Challenge 3 no extra clues

Challenge 4 Later clues to be introduced if necessary:

1. There are only five letters in the name.
2. This disciple was sometimes known as Peter, or simply explain this when they share the correct answer.

Stage 1 Completion

Give the **Congratulations certificate** to the group when they complete **Stage 1**.

Provide a Bible for one person to read the story in **Luke 24:13-35** aloud.

If you are running this as a timed challenge, pause the timer while the group takes time to read through the passage.

Stage 2

Leader's script

Set the scene

Say: 'Jesus didn't just appear to Cleopas. Not long after, he appeared to a group of disciples while they were together. But Thomas, one of the original twelve that Jesus chose, missed it! But Jesus visited again when Thomas was present so he could see Jesus' wounds for himself. It was mind blowing.

But when Jesus wasn't with us, we were still afraid. We didn't know what to do next. The twelve, actually, eleven now that Judas was gone, spent a lot of time together. Did you know they all had nicknames? I suggested that we started going by our nicknames to be super-secretive, but it didn't really catch on. I think it's because Philip didn't like the idea. He didn't have a nickname. But if you're going to hang out around here, you should get to know the other names. That's your next challenge: List all nicknames. You've got to list 11.

I've already told you about Philip, that he doesn't have a nickname so you already have that name. But the rest either had another name, a nickname or became known in new ways.

Solve each of these puzzles to confirm each of the names, and you'll have a full list of the ones who saw Jesus alive again.'

Give out the **Stage 2** envelope which will include Challenge sheets 5 and 6. These are better completed in sequence, and both must be completed correctly before Stage 2 is completed.

Challenge 5

The clues on the challenge may be obvious to some and less so to others, so here is an additional set of clues – based on wider general knowledge, if anyone is struggling.

Share these verbally if people get stuck.

1. Philip (they are given this answer).
2. Famously a Tank Engine, ** Edison invented the lightbulb.
3. The first Pope, Andrew's brother, you must do what he says when he says it (game).
4. ** Garfield was considered an Amazing Spiderman, ** Lloyd Webber composed songs about how Joseph had a Technicolor Dreamcoat and Jesus Christ is a Superstar.
5. a. Mr. ** Bond gathers intelligence, LeBron ** is the greatest 'baller in the game.
b. ** Cena has rapped & wrestled, Mr ** Lewis will give you a great Christmas advert.
6. The full name of Homer's son. (The Simpsons).
7. ** Milner has captained England, ** Corden played Peter Rabbit, ** McAvoy led the X-Men.
8. Hey **, Mr ** Law captains with a hook, Mr ** Bellingham scores goals for England. Not many people are called this now, as this name is synonymous with betrayal. It's a name like this.... now add -AS at the end.
9. Mr ** Cowell judges if people have talent, Simple ** met a Pie-man.
10. Sir ** Pinsent rowed for Gold, ** authored the 1st New Testament book.

Challenge  6 The eight answers are hidden round the room beforehand (see **Set up your room** above) in four possible ways.

Method 1: Fingerprints and breath on glass, breathe on the glass to reveal the word.

Method 2: Lemon juice as invisible ink. Use the electric tealights or small torches, behind the paper to reveal the 'invisible ink' writing. It might take a bit of heat.

Method 3: Notes inside balloons. Pop the balloons to reveal the answers.

Method 4: Writing on paper airplanes, refold the paper airplanes up to see the letters in the correct order.

Stage 2 Completion

After the group have completed **Challenges 5 and 6**, give them the **Congratulations certificate** and provide a Bible. Encourage the group to read the story aloud from **John 20:19-29**. If this is a timed challenge, pause the timer while the group takes time to read through the passage.

Stage 3

Leader's script

Set the scene

Say: 'Even after we'd seen the resurrected Jesus a couple of times, we were worried that the Jewish leaders and Romans would imprison or kill us, just like they did with Jesus. When the festival of Pentecost came around, we were hiding together and praying in a locked upper room, a lot like this one. Jesus told us to wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon us. So that's what we were doing. We were waiting and praying.'

Now give out the **Stage 3** envelope.

Challenge 7 Rap or poem

Encourage the group to work together, to be creative, to have fun, and to be ready to perform.

Although some may be nervous or embarrassed, this is a great chance for the young people to express their faith or questions, or what it looks like to live as a Christian. Provide a safe place for individuals to step out in front of others.

Challenge 8 Escape

The code for the padlock is in the order of the clues for **Challenge 8**. So, the Bible held the first digit, etc. If they don't realise this, then they won't know the order, and it could take a very long time to try all the order permutations.

Stage 3 Completion

Once the group puts the code into the padlock or present the four digits to you, hand out the final **Congratulations certificate**.

Stage 1



Challenge 1

Two of the disciples have just returned from a trip, claiming that Jesus is alive and that they met him on the road. We want to record the place where Jesus appeared, but the followers were so excited that they have forgotten the name of the village. We have a scaled map and some details of their journey. Use the information to work out how far they could have walked (there and back), which direction, and then which villages fit the details.

- They left Jerusalem around 3:00pm today.
- They met a stranger on the road. They were talking about all the things that had happened to them, so they probably walked at a speed of about 2 miles an hour. The stranger explained how Jesus fulfilled all the Jewish scriptures about the Messiah.
- They stopped at the village and persuaded the stranger to stay and eat with them. This meal would have taken about an hour. During the meal, when the stranger broke the bread, they realised it was Jesus.
- Once they realised it was Jesus, they hurried straight back here, likely walking around 3-3.5 miles an hour.
- There were a couple of small delays throughout this venture.
- They've just arrived back here in Jerusalem at 10:00pm this evening.
- So, which village did they go to and return in that time?

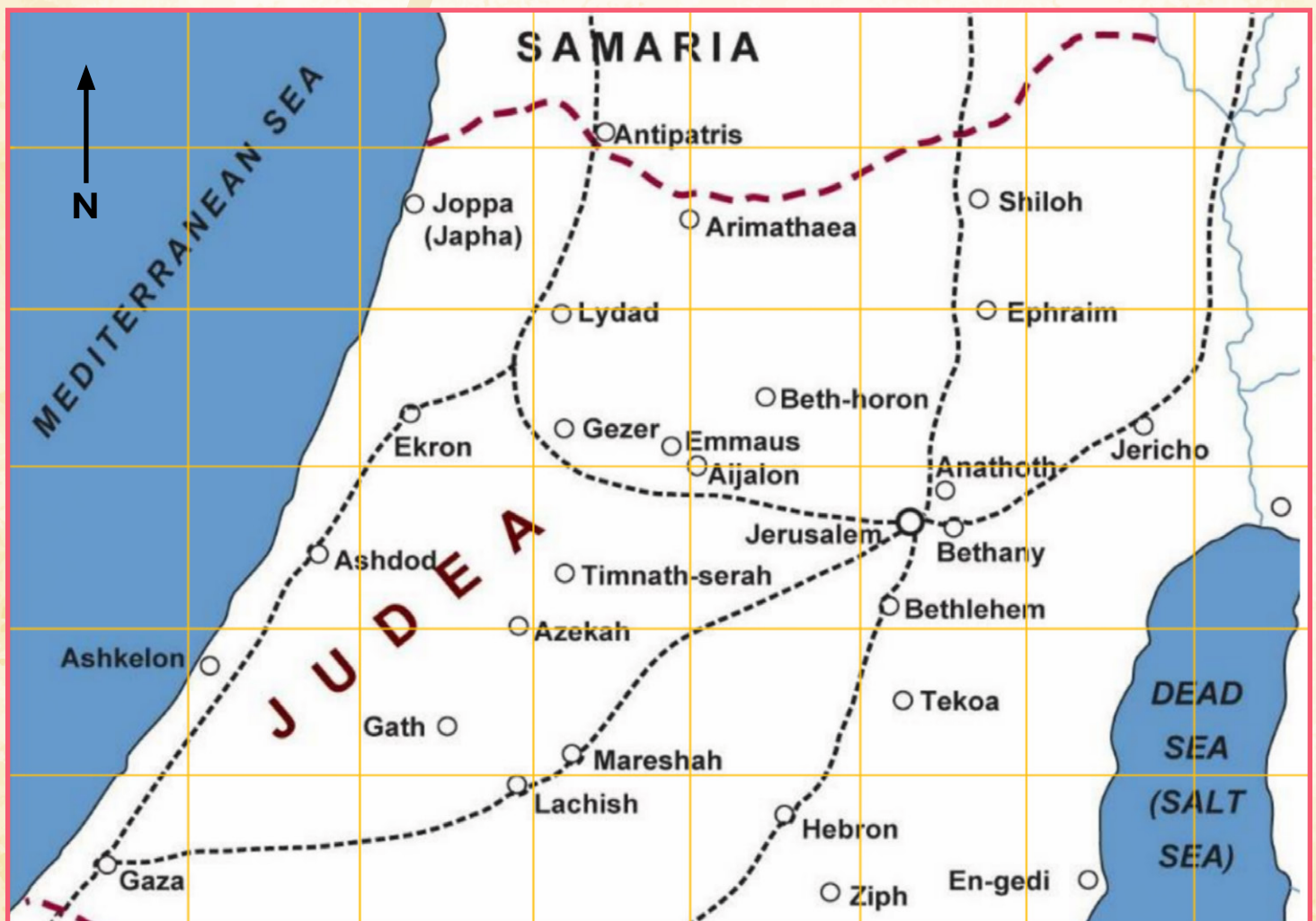
Use the map below of Judea, to consider distances that could have been covered in the time frame.

We need to complete the statement...

The two travellers met Jesus while travelling to _____!

Map of Judea

Scale: |-----| = 5 miles



Challenge 2

We need to confirm the name of one of the travellers.

We have several clues to help us find each letter of their name. These clues will reveal a letter of the traveller's name in order.

1. The first letter is in CHRIST, but not in TRUTH.
2. The second letter is in LUKE'S GOSPEL, but not in KEY or SPRING.
3. The third letter is in DISCIPLE, but not in PLACID.
4. The fourth letter is in JOURNEY, but not in JEWISH RUIN.
5. The fifth letter appears twice in APPARITION but not in DREAM.
6. The sixth letter is a vowel, but not in EXECUTOR.
7. The last letter is in MY SAVIOUR, but not in A VICTORY.

One of the travellers is called _____!

Challenge 3

The travellers state that Jesus explained how his death and resurrection are foretold in the Scriptures, explaining many of the stories in the holy books. But which religious text did he start with?

We've managed to create a list of many of the authors of the Scriptures and we believe the answer is the one that is not included.

K	B	J	O	S	H	A	R	Z	E	I	K	H
G	U	M	N	A	H	U	M	A	L	H	J	S
M	D	K	C	I	C	A	C	L	F	O	O	I
O	J	I	K	H	L	D	D	K	N	M	N	A
S	M	I	A	A	I	A	I	A	I	A	V	G
E	J	C	C	V	B	F	H	M	N	J	A	G
P	I	H	A	S	H	A	I	A	S	I	D	A
M	I	D	H	J	K	K	H	K	K	F	E	H
I	S	O	L	O	M	O	N	O	S	O	M	L

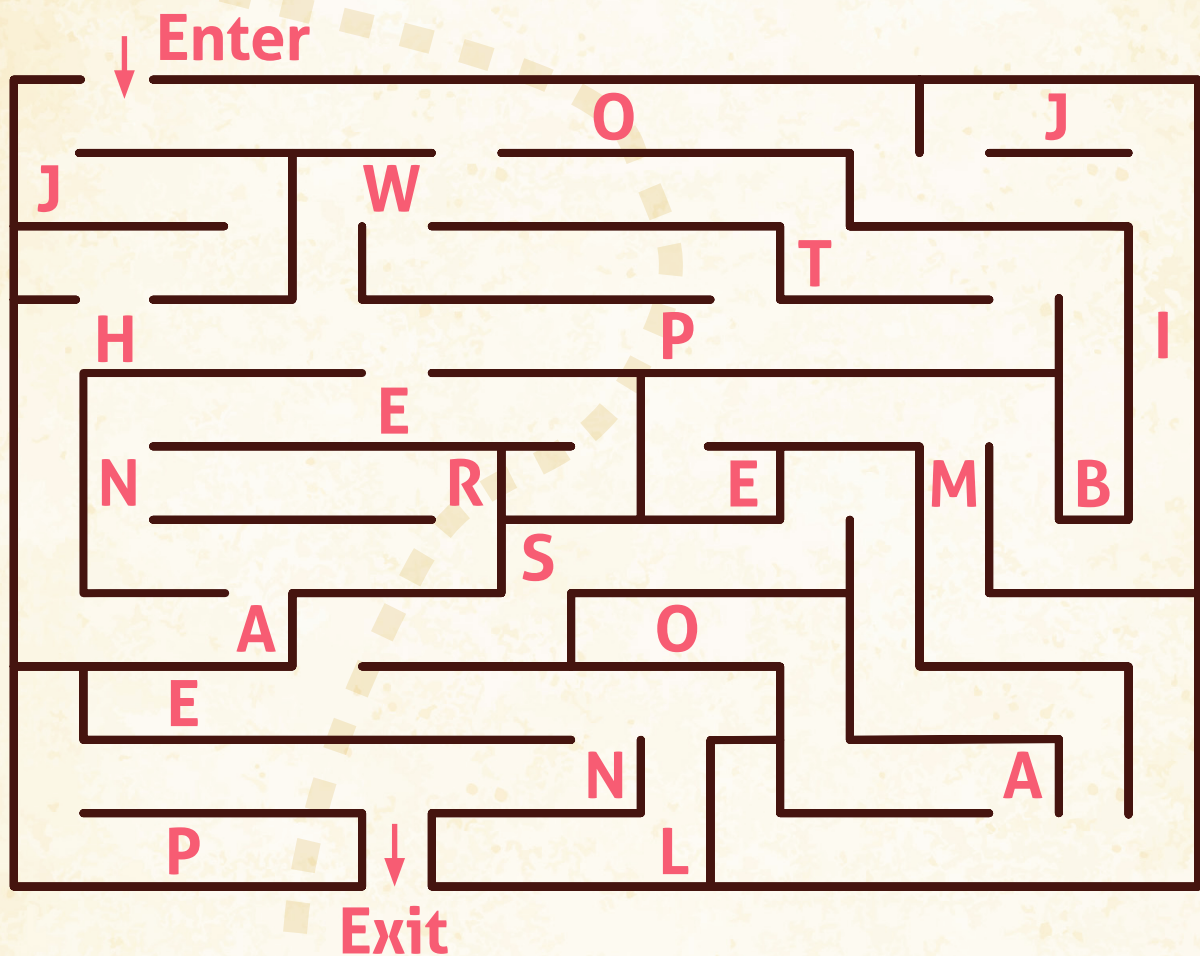
**EZRA, SOLOMON, DAVID, DANIEL, ISAIAH, MICAH, MOSES,
HABAKKUK, HAGGAI, MALACHI, NAHUM, JONAH**

Jesus explained what was said about himself beginning with the books of _____!

Challenge 4

As the travellers arrived, we were just celebrating that Jesus was alive, as he had already appeared to one of the disciples. Which disciple had already seen Jesus?

Only the most direct route through the maze will give the letters needed as an anagram. Find that route and collect the letters along the way and rearrange them to discover the name of the disciple who Jesus had already met.



When the travellers arrived, we were celebrating that Jesus had risen from the grave and he had already met _____!

Stage 2



Challenge 5

Nicknames

Can you list all eleven of us who were there and saw Jesus when he visited us on several occasions in the locked room?

Here are the clues:

1. Philip (I've given you that one).
2. Often known as the Twin. He doubted Jesus' was really alive again.
3. Denied knowing Jesus, but later became a 'rock' for the church.
4. Often considered the first disciple, and he brought his brother as well.
5. Together these brothers argued and were known as Sons of Thunder.
6. He was also known as Nathanael.
7. Often had a suffix name of The Minor, due to having the same name as another disciple.
8. Known to some as Thaddeus.
9. Another disciple with a namesake in the group, he was referred to by his previous religious beliefs.
10. Known to his friends from his tax collecting days as Levi, this disciple went on to write one of the four Gospels.

The disciples who met with Jesus in the room were: (11 answers)

1. Philip

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5a. _____

5b. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Challenge 6

The Jewish festival of Pentecost is approaching. There are Jews and Gentiles who have converted to Judaism visiting Jerusalem from all over the world. They have all come to worship and celebrate the festival. They speak many languages, and we can sometimes hear them outside through the locked door. Sometimes while we are praying, we try to name all the nations they are from.

Can you discover where they are from?

Check the room for **Challenge 6** notes, in places where the answers might be hidden. They are not so easy to find.

Some of the people in Jerusalem have come from these nations: (8 answers)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

Stage 3



Challenge 7

Filled with the Holy Spirit and bursting to tell.

Read through Acts 2:1-15

Your challenge as a team is to write a (minimum) two verse rap or poem that shares your experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit and what you want to tell others. You could include:

- What the experience was like at Pentecost.
- Jesus' challenge to us to share our faith with others.
- Jesus' promise that the Holy Spirit is always with us and will give us courage.
- Jesus' victory over death – he is alive again.

When you have finished, you should perform this to the rest of the people in the room.

Challenge 8 Escape

Time to escape the room!

There is a lock preventing us from getting outside. Now that we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we want to share about Jesus with the people from around the world gathered in Jerusalem.

The lock has four digits and each of these digits can be found hidden round the room. Decipher these pictorial clues to discover the hiding places for each digit and then put them into the lock to escape the room.

-
-
-
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Stage 1



Congratulations...

You have successfully discovered that Jesus is indeed alive and risen from the grave.

Read aloud the story in **Luke 24:13-35** to hear the story that you have just explored.



Stage 2

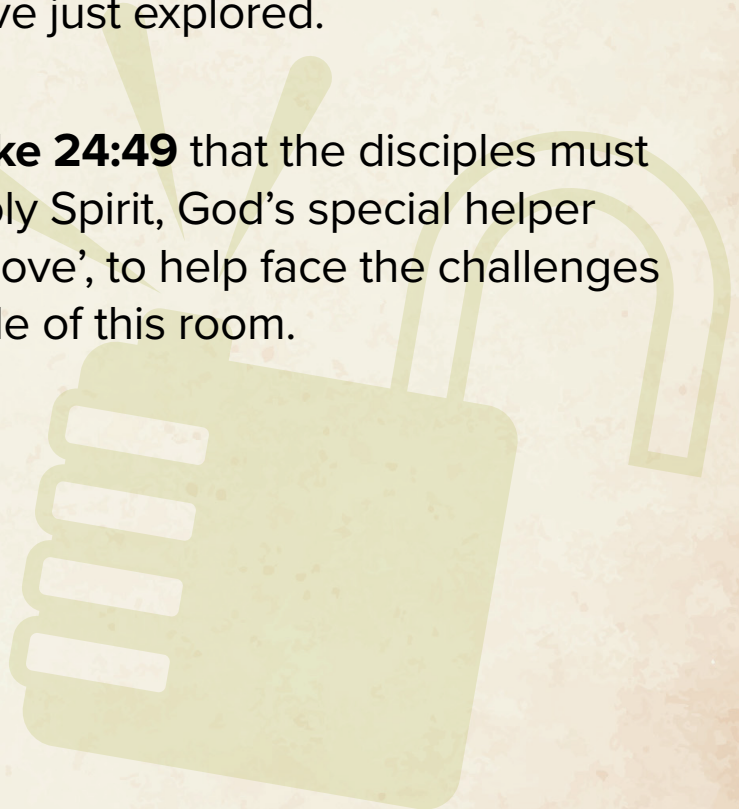


Congratulations...

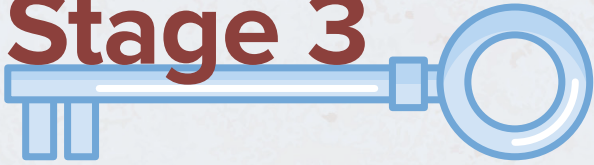
You have completed **Stage 2** and successfully discovered that we disciples all met with Jesus again and were made ready to receive the Holy Spirit.

Read aloud the story in **John 20:19-29** to hear the story you have just explored.

We can also read in **Luke 24:49** that the disciples must wait again for the Holy Spirit, God's special helper sending 'power from above', to help face the challenges outside of this room.



Stage 3



Congratulations...

You have completed the 3rd and final stage of the challenge and successfully discovered that as disciples of Jesus we are not meant to be afraid, and we're not meant to stay in hiding. We can be filled with the Holy Spirit and have the courage to share the love of Jesus with the world.

Read through **Acts 2:1-15** (and the rest of the chapter if time allows).

Collect your prizes, and be sure to pray for each other, and invite the Holy Spirit to fill each of you.

ANSWERS SHEET

Stage 1

Challenge

The two travellers met Jesus while traveling to EMMAUS!

Challenge

- The first letter is in CHRIST, but not in TRUTH = **C or I or S**
- The second letter is not in KEY or SPRING, but is in LUKE'S GOSPEL = **L or U or O**
- The third letter is in DISCIPLE, but not in PLACID = **S or E**
- The fourth letter is in JOURNEY, but not in JEWISH RUIN = **O or Y**
- The fifth letter appears twice in APPARITION but not in DREAM = **P or I**
- The sixth letter is a vowel, but not in EXECUTOR = **A or I**
- The last letter is in MY SAVIOUR, but not in A VICTORY = **M or S or U**

Options are **C/I/S - L/U/O - S/E - O/Y - P/I - A/I - M/S/U**

One of the Travellers is called CLEOPAS!

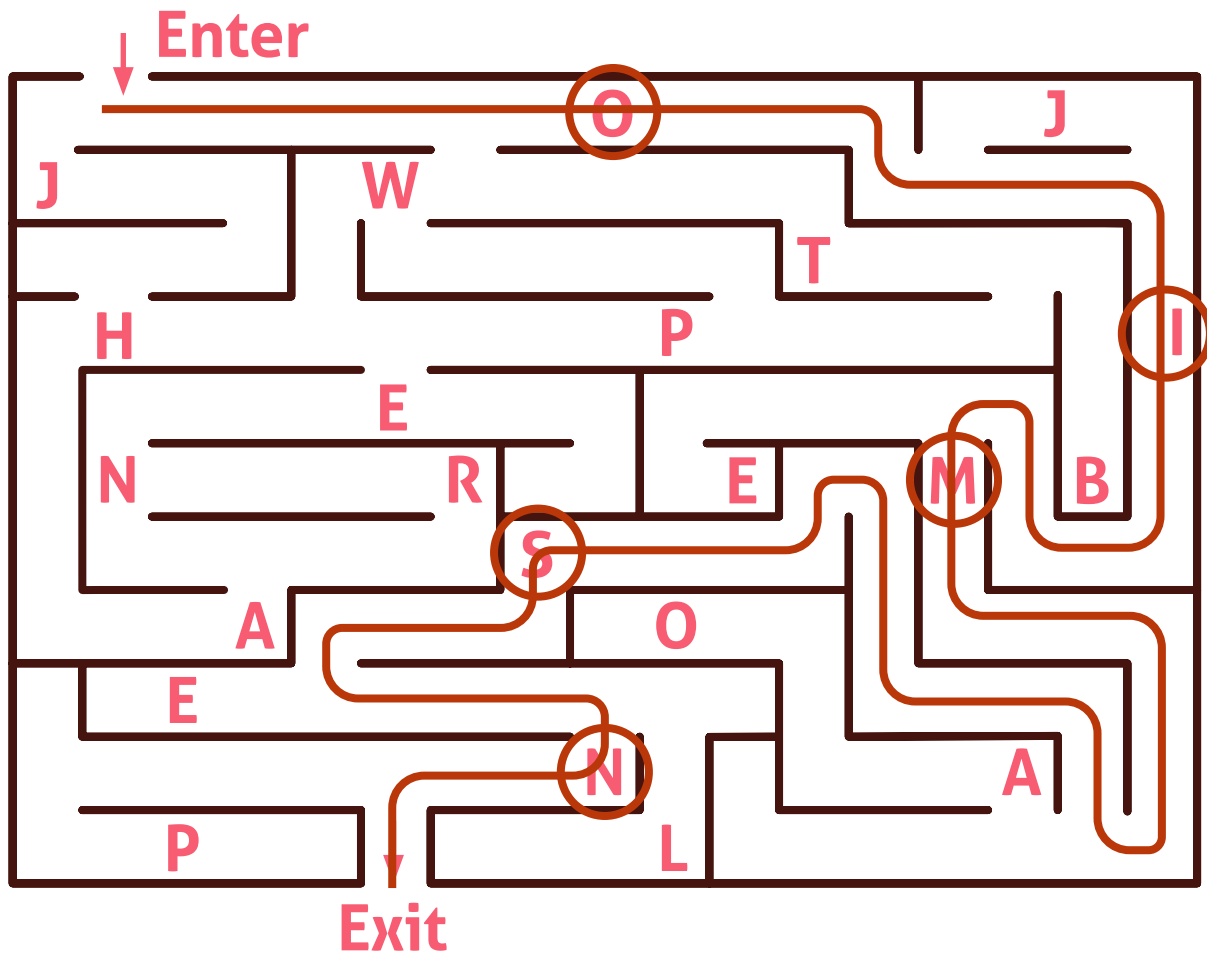
Challenge

K	B	J	O	S	H	A	R	Z	E	I	K	H
G	U	M	N	A	H	U	M	A	L	H	J	S
M	D	K	C	I	C	A	C	L	F	O	O	I
O	J	I	K	H	L	D	D	K	N	M	N	A
S	M	I	A	A	I	A	I	A	I	A	V	G
E	J	C	C	V	B	F	H	M	N	J	A	G
P	I	H	A	S	H	A	I	A	S	I	D	A
M	I	D	H	J	K	K	H	K	K	F	E	H
I	S	O	L	O	M	O	N	O	S	O	M	L

~~EZRA, SOLOMON, DAVID, DANIEL, ISAIAH, MICAH,~~ **MOSES**, ~~HABAKKUK, HAGGAI, MALACHI, NAHUM, JONAH~~
 Jesus explained what was said about himself beginning with the books of MOSES!

Challenge 4

Which of the disciples had already seen Jesus?



When the travellers arrived, we were celebrating that Jesus had risen from the grave and had already met SIMON!
He was also known as Peter – The Rock!

Stage 2

Challenge

1. Philip
2. Thomas
3. Simon (Peter)
4. Andrew
5. James & John
6. Bartholomew
7. James (son of Alphaeus)
8. Judas
9. Simon the Zealot
10. Matthew

Challenge

1. Parthia
 2. Elam
 3. Pontus
 4. Asia
 5. Egypt
 6. Libya
 7. Rome
 8. Crete
-

Stage 3

Challenge  – they perform their own rap or poem.

Challenge

1. Bye – Bells = Bibles (*Hide sticky note with the first digit of the code in a pile of Bibles in the room*)
 2. I – Love – sweets (*Hide sticky note with the second digit in tuck shop or under sweets to hand out later*)
 3. (Moon-on=Mo) – Bye – (Leg-egg=L) – pH1 = Mobile Phone (*Hide the sticky note with the third digit on/under your mobile*)
 4. Look – Under – Your – Seat (*Hide the sticky note with the fourth digit under a chair*)
-