



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 1: Sent

Suggested Week of Use: September 1, 2024

Core Passage: Acts 13:1-12

News Story Summary

At the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, elite athletes from around the world took center stage to compete in thirty-two sports. Some countries sent a massive delegation of participants. For example, the United States sent more than 600 participants, while the host country France had close to that number. But hidden among the swaths of the flags from prominent countries flew flags from four unique nations—Belize, Liechtenstein, Nauru, and Somalia. Their claim to fame? These nations sent only one athlete each to the Olympics. None of the four athletes won a medal for their country, but they became quick celebrities for choosing to compete despite the stress and loneliness that came with the solo experience. For them, being sent to represent their country was a badge of honor and pride.

For more information, search “Four nations with just one athlete to 2024 Olympics”

Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, play a trivia game about the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris. As adults arrive, give each person a notecard and a pen. Explain that you will read true/false trivia questions, and they should write their answers on their notecards.

1. The U.S. won the most Olympic medals. (true—it won 250)
2. The U.S. won the most gold medals. (false—it tied with China)
3. A 2024 Olympic competition took place in Tahiti. (true—surfing)
4. One U.S. medalist can solve a Rubik’s cube in under twenty seconds. (true—gymnast Stephen Nedoroscik)
5. Athletes from Russia and Belarus were banned from the Olympics. (false—33 athletes from the two countries were classified as “Individual Neutral Athletes.” They could compete, but the countries’ flags, national anthems, and uniforms were not allowed.)
6. Simone Biles is the most-decorated U.S. female Olympian. (false—She is the most decorated gymnast.)

Review the answers and give the winner(s) a plastic medal. Say: *This year’s Olympics was memorable for another reason.* Tell the story about the four countries who sent only one athlete to Paris. Ask: *How would you feel as an athlete sent to the Olympics? How would you feel if you were the only athlete representing your country?* Share that today’s session focuses on individuals who were sent on a different kind of mission, a mission to share the gospel around the known world.

Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, recall the story of the four athletes sent to the Olympics. On a large sheet of paper, create a two-column chart with “Similar” written at the top of one column and “Different” at the top of the other column. Direct the group to compare the experience of the four athletes with Saul and Barnabas being sent for a specific purpose. Write their answers on the paper. Ask: *How are believers today similar to or different from Saul and Barnabas?* Record their answers on the paper. Challenge adults to think about ways they are being called out and sent for specific purposes. Ask: *Where do you sense God sending you to represent Him or share the gospel?* Close in prayer, asking God to empower the group to fulfill the calling He is placing on their lives.