

Session 10

Counting the cost

Aim: To encourage the group to think about what it costs to follow Jesus and the importance of communicating this clearly.

Objectives:

By the end of the session the group should:
Have considered the cost of following Jesus.
Know how to lead someone to Christ.

Personally Speaking...

I think that this session is one that could be open to 'wrong interpretation'. The danger is that when we start talking about counting the cost people either think they have to pay to become Christians or worse, think that they buy their salvation by the things that they do.

Jesus Christ has paid the price for our sin! His death on the cross has satisfied God's need for Justice. His Grace has made the way open for us to be forgiven by him and to know him.

However, it is important that when we talk about Jesus and following him we don't paint a picture of an easy life after conversion - the Bible doesn't promise one. It even says that people will hate us like they hated Christ! Conversely, we don't want to give the impression that once you become a Christian you kiss joy and happiness goodbye. We have the Good News that leads to Eternal life. Definitely something worth shouting about! There is a very delicate balance between false triumphalism and gloomy pessimism

The Session:

Warming Up - Your bids please.

Give each member of the group a copy of the 'Your bids please' handout. On the sheet are things that they would maybe willing to do or give in order to get something better. Tell them that you have four items for them to bid for. These items have no monetary value but can be paid for with combinations of things from

the sheet.

The four things are:

A day off college, school or work.

A date with your favourite film or music star.

A week of no housework.

A hot, sunny day.

(Feel free to make up your own.)

In the 'For:' column they are to put the letter of thing they want next to the item(s) they will do or give up to get the thing.

An example may help! If, to get a day off college they are prepared to 'Walk the dog', 'Miss 2 hours TV' and 'Do the shopping' they should put an 'A' in the 'For:' column next to those things. The items have different values (completely arbitrary) which they can use to help them. Everyone starts with 100 points. Give the group 5 minutes to fill in their sheets

When everyone has finished spend a few minutes discussing their choices. Tell the group that being a Christian has a cost - sometimes we stop doing stuff that we liked doing. Other times we do stuff that we would rather not do. Maybe ask the group for examples of both things.

*****IMPORTANT***** Stress that though there is a cost to Christianity it is not in the form of paying for salvation or that by doing 'things' we earn God's favour or our salvation.

Finish off this section by saying that when we talk to people about Jesus and following him we have the responsibility of telling it like it is.

There is no promise in the Bible of an easy life or lots of nice things. We are promised opposition, struggles and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives to see us through it all! This is a difficult section as if you belabour the point you will be accused of making Christianity

unattractive. If you don't say enough - it's cheap grace! Seems you can't win.

Over To You - Prayin' the Prayer.

The aim of any evangelism is to see someone become a Christian!

So what do we do if after going through our testimonies, presenting the Gospel, doing a bit of apologetics and telling them it isn't all a bed of roses, the person we are with says to us; "Ok, how do I become a Christian?"

The bible doesn't give a "sinner's prayer" for us to copy. So how can we lead someone in prayer? Ask the group to spend five minutes discussing between themselves (let them form their own groups) what they would ask someone to pray who wanted to become a Christian. They will need to give scriptural backing for the things they are going to ask the person to pray. A couple of copies of the sheet 'The Three Minute Gospel' may help.

At the very least they need to cover confession of sin, repentance and acceptance of Christ as Lord.

Use either a large sheet of paper or a white board to write out the definitive "sinner's prayer" that your group comes up with. (Maybe at a later date give them all a copy of the prayer printed on a small card. They may never know when it might be handy!)

Pulling It Together.

There are lots of things that could still be said about evangelism. Who? Me? is just a start!

It is important before finishing the session to have a time of prayer for one another.

Particularly that God will give each of us wisdom and boldness in our evangelism and the courage to rely on Him for all that we need to do the job.

You can ask if there are any of the group who want to pray about anything that has arisen for them from what they have done on the course. If no one wants to be prayed for specifically spend time in small groups praying for each other and for non-Christians that the group know.

