

# Session 1

## The What

**Aim:** To look at what evangelism is and some of the different examples of evangelism in the New Testament.

### **Objectives:**

*At the end of the session the group should:*

Be able to explain what Evangelism, at its simplest, is.

Be able to identify the different biblical approaches to evangelism.

### **Personally Speaking...**

*I got my first taste of evangelism when I was seven when I tried to tell a friend about Jesus at primary school. He became a Christian, I think more to shut me up than because he really wanted to.*

*I am what would be called a reluctant evangelist. I want to do it, I have a real desire to see people come to know Jesus but I ain't no Billy Graham. When I was 16 I went on a British Youth for Christ 'Street Invaders' team. We spent one week learning and two weeks in North London doing. We had a great time and saw a few people come to know Jesus.*

*Several years after that I went to university in Leeds (great place!) and in my second year got signed up to lead a multi-media evangelism programme called 'The Edge'.*

*Four of us started it from scratch and went on to produce six very varied events. I don't know if anyone became a Christian because of them.*

*I hope, however, that they made people think and consider Christianity a bit more closely.*

*For the Edge I was very much behind the scenes and I guess that is how most of my evangelism is done. I talk to people when the occasion arises and try to live a life that is as much a witness as my words - I fail quite a lot.*

*Evangelism is as much a way of life as it is an activity. I'm not very good at it. I get scared and don't talk, I mess up my answers through lack of knowledge and miss opportunities by being half asleep. I'll keep trying though.*

## **The Session:**

### **Warming Up - Test your knowledge of Evangelism.**

Using the 'Test your knowledge of Evangelism' handout introduce the idea of evangelism.

The sheet is a humorous, multiple choice, questionnaire. For best effect introduce it as if it were a serious test of their knowledge.

The group should catch on pretty quickly (hopefully).

Believe it or not, there are no right answers.

### **Over To You - Manifesto.**

In 1974 the International Congress on World Evangelisation defined evangelism:

To evangelise is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so to be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his church and responsible service in the world.

Now it's the group's turn to have a go! Using the 'Manifesto of Evangelism' handout: Ask the group to try and define evangelism as best they can. The definition should be written as though a manifesto is being prepared that is to be presented to a new church evangelism committee.

What things should be included? What should be excluded? Discuss the group's results and finish

off by reading the quote given previously.

**The Biblical Perspective - Different Types.**

Split the group in to three smaller groups. Give each group one of the following verses:

**Group 1** Acts 8:26-40, 2 Timothy 4:5 & Ephesians 4:11 - Stories of 'Evangelists' doing their stuff

**Group 2** John 4:1-26 & 1 Peter 3:15 - Jesus and the women at the well and Peter exhorting us to have an answer ready. Both examples of Christians 'gossiping' the gospel

**Group 3** Matthew 5:16 & John 13:35 - Lifestyle evangelism

Ask the groups to answer the following questions:

1. Who is the passage talking to/about.
2. What type of evangelism is being done.

Regroup and discuss the answers. Of the three types of evangelism that are represented in the exercise which do the group feel they are capable of doing and which, if any, they are currently involved in.

**Pulling It Together.**

Someone described evangelism as 'one beggar

telling another beggar where to go to get bread.' In this session the questions of 'what' and 'how' concerning evangelism have been looked at. The group has looked at what evangelism is - how they define it and how a group of 'professionals' defined it. The bible study gets the group to think about what they are doing and how they can be an evangelist without having to stand on a platform in front of thousands of people or be the next Billy Graham, though if there is one in the group Praise the Lord!

# Test your knowledge of Evangelism

**1.** You are asked to head your church's evangelism programme. How do you respond?

- a: Hire a 'thicko' to drop tracts on the A338 (or your nearest local road!) during the rush hour.
- b: Tell them you need to pray about it - for at least a year.
- c: Ask if you could serve on the tract stapling committee instead.
- d: Start practising your Billy Graham imitation.

**2.** What does lifestyle evangelism mean to you?

- a: Going to a restaurant and leaving a tract as a tip.
- b: Playing the Christian radio station loudly enough for all your neighbours to hear.
- c: Tossing a 'Jesus Frisbee' at the beach.
- d: Jogging in your "I'm a Jesus praisin' - (Your Church here) raisin'" T-shirt.

**3.** You notice a new neighbour moving in next door. How do you respond?

- a: Pretend you don't see him until he's moved every thing in.
- b: As he's carrying in the piano say "Hey, if you were to have a heart attack and die right now, do you know if you'd go to heaven?"
- c: Welcome him, then suggest that he trim his spruce tree so it doesn't hang over the fence anymore.

**4.** How should you respond when someone says, "There's something different about you. What is it?"

- a: "I just shaved off my beard."
- b: "What do you mean by 'different' mate?"
- c: "You don't see paisley polyester leisure suits like this one very often, do you?"
- d: "I'm a born again dispensational, pre-millennial, Spirit filled, evangelical who's been regenerated, justified and sanctified by Christ's glorious act of atonement."

**5.** When you're doing door to door evangelism, what's the first thing you should say when the door opens?

- a: "Did you know that God loves you, even though you turned the lawn sprinkler on me?"
- b: "Could you please remove your dog's teeth from my leg?"
- c: "Would you like to buy a flower?"
- d: "What a lovely home, and what a nice end table you have. Speaking of end, if you were to die

tonight...."

e: "What a beautiful clock, When your time runs out...."

**6.** A visitor to your church asks, "What does your God have to say about the ontological problem of the ground of being?" How do you respond?

- a: "Say what?"
- b: Tell her you don't discuss things like that in public.
- c: Offer to check on it and get back to her.
- d: Check to see if you still have your wallet.
- e: Tell her you gave up ontology for lent.

**7.** What's the best way to witness to people at work.

- a: Anonymously fax gospel tracts to your business contacts.
- b: Hold a Bible study during work time - after all, we're commanded to 'seek first the Kingdom of God.'
- c: Ask the Boss if you can open meetings in prayer.
- d: Leave detailed instructions for the person who'll take over your job after the rapture.

**8.** Someone notices you reading the Bible and asks, "Do you really believe that stuff?" You say,

- a: "No, I just look at it for the pictures."
- b: "No, I'm helping my son (friend, Dad, Mum, Uncle....) do a book report."
- c: "I can't talk to you now - I'm doing a Bible study on evangelism."

**9.** You're telling a neighbour that she needs to believe in God, and she responds, "I am God!" What do you do?

- a: Ask for clarification.
- b: Ask for proof.
- c: Kneel.
- d: Run.

Your Score: If you selected any of the above you may need to learn more about evangelism. Used with permission of D Edwins, Moorlands college

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# manifesto of evangelism