

Building Community *Living for God*

3. Sharing Faith

Note to Leaders:

This study contains three significant activities thinking about evangelism and relational mission in particular. You might want to select the activities you think would be most helpful - either the UK trends discussion, or the 'styles of evangelism' activity - but the circles of acquaintance is the most important to get to in terms of people thinking about sharing their own faith. Alternatively you might like to spread the activities over two weeks.

To Start with:

- On a scale of 1-10 how do positively or negatively do people respond to the following words. After scoring them - discuss why people have those responses.
 - Mission
 - Evangelism
 - Witnessing
 - Guest Service
 - Conversion
 - Testimony
 - First Contact (Evangelism)
- Why do you think some people are so much more positive and confident about sharing the gospel than others?
- Read *Matthew 28.16-20* together - take some time to discuss what strikes people from this passage, and what their response to it is.
- Give everyone a copy of 'Church in the UK' . **Handout 1** and discuss what people find interesting about it.

- Who do you know that has come to faith recently (in the last couple of years) and how did that come about? (If there are any new believers in the group get them to tell their story!) What does this suggest to you about how people in our context become followers of Jesus? How do you feel about that?

In the UK most people come to faith through someone they know, trust, respect, and who lives life with them. People's actions, attitudes and responses can witness to their faith as well as their words. Clearly conversations about Jesus need to come at some point for someone to come to faith, but for many people it is a journey they

6. How We Might Share our Faith:

Bill Hybels from Willow Creek Church has developed a model for how different types of Christians tend to share their faith based on biblical examples. Make sure everyone can see the chart below and have a look at the examples. See **Handout 2: Sharing Faith Table**

What do you think of them? What would you say are the pros and cons of each?

Which would you say **you** are most comfortable with? Why? What might you do to be more proactive in using your 'style' of evangelism, and how could others help you?

7. Who might we share our faith with?

Give everybody a copy of the concentric diagram (**Handout 3**), and ask them to spend 10 minutes marking on the people they know who fall into the appropriate categories. Now ask them to identify those who are not yet Christians (as far as they know)

- Discuss what strikes people from the pattern of contacts they have in their life.

9. Going back to the diagram ask people to pray about who they think seems to be open to or interested in spiritual things. Then spend some time in small groups discussing who they know that God might be stirring the heart of - and how they could be part of that journey for that person.

Reflecting:

As a group spend some time praying for those people who have identified individuals they know who seem open to the gospel. Pray for courage and opportunity to share their faith. Also pray for us as a church that we will be open to new believers and wise in how we encourage people towards Jesus. Finally ask God to give you a heart for the lost, a real concern and love for those who don't know Jesus as their saviour yet.