

The Adventure is a nine session course which will equip your small group to embrace its missional calling and focus.

FACILITATOR HANDBOOK

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Facilitator's Handbook

This handbook can be simply used as a PDF online, or can be printed as an A4 booklet. Everybody should have access to the participants' online pdf version of this handbook.

This version with the facilitator's notes is not intended for the rest of the participants.

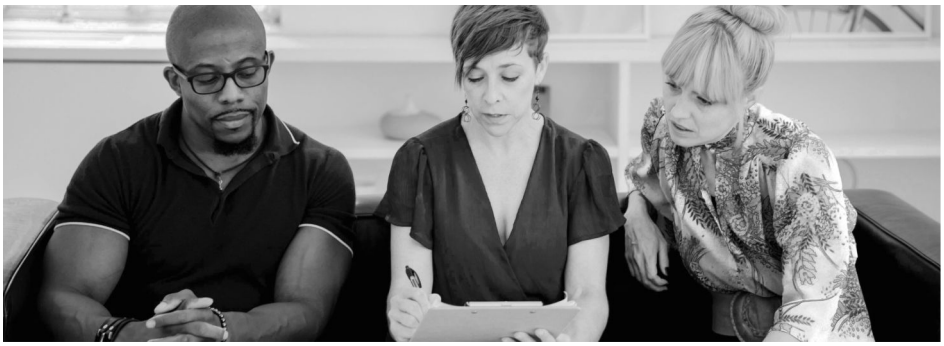
Before starting the course

If you don't already have one, set up a WhatsApp group or equivalent. Always start and finish the sessions with prayer.

You will also need to have A3 paper for session 3, and get people to bring their own paper and pens for session 5. Have spare paper and pens with you at every session in case needed.

www.the4points.com
You will need to purchase a number of 4points wristbands and prayer cards for the group for session 6. Best to do this at the start of the course to avoid any delays in shipping etc.

We suggest one wristband and 3 or 4 prayer cards (gospel explanation cards with a prayer of commitment) for each person. You or they can always order more from the4points website. The wristbands are different colours and sizes.



Your Role as the Facilitator

The facilitator's job is to help the group run smoothly. You don't need to be the expert in the room. Keeping time will be one of the biggest challenges, as people like to talk, and keeping discussions to time may be difficult. If you don't mind the group going over the 90 min advised length then it's less of a problem. But people can get frustrated if one or two dominate the conversations. Your job is to help the talkers be concise and the quiet ones to come forward with their thoughts.

It will help if you can remind people during the week of the Adventure they are being asked to do at the end of the last session. Encourage group members to engage with the Adventure, and come ready to share their experience at the start of the next meeting.

Honesty and vulnerability are requirements for any learner, so it will help if you model this with the group and set the example.

The participants' notes are the same as your own, minus the facilitator's notes. The participants' notes are really provided for back up and to help keep each session on course and to time. So, there is no need to be reading from the notes during the video inputs. The video input summaries are expanded on in the videos themselves. The notes are really there for future reference, or for anyone who misses a session.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this nine session course which is:

• to equip your small group to embrace its missional calling and focus

• designed to see group members grow in missional confidence to become missionaries to the places where they live, learn, work or play

• to allow you to experience the excitement of connecting with not-yet-believers that God is drawing to himself

• intended to create an anticipation of the addition of new believers to your group

• designed to enable you to work through all 9 sessions in which each one builds on the last one to create a vibrant, missionally-minded, growing group.



01

DREAM

Considering 'what could be?'

02

DELIGHT

Discovering pleasure in sharing our faith

03

DISCOVER

Finding a common missional

04

DIG

Preparing the soil to receive

05

DARE

Listening to their story, telling our story

06

DECLARE

Learning to share God's story

07

DISCERN

Finding people who want to hear

08

DISCIPLE

Growing new believers

09

DEVELOP

Creating sustainable missional rhythms for group life

If helpful, make your own notes throughout the course while listening to the videos or when you are discussing topics.

Pay particular attention to anything that seems to carry added weight, or be of greater significance. These might be moments when God is trying to get your attention.

01 DREAM OF WHAT COULD BE

OPENING PRAYER

NOTE - The facilitator, or someone delegated prays for the meeting.

SESSION VIDEOS

NOTE - The videos for each session are put together, with pauses for the discussion or exercises built in. So, start the video when the first video is needed, and then pause at the end of that bit of input while other activities are taking place.

VIDEO: INTRO TO THE COURSE (4 mins)

The course is a mixture of short video inputs, discussions, vox pops and practical exercises, generally lasting around 90 mins per session if you keep to time. It builds week on week. It includes Adventures!

We define 'missional' as living intentionally, individually and together, to bring the good news (gospel) of Jesus to a lost, broken and dying world.

We describe missional as - being, doing and saying the gospel, where we live, learn, work or play. Sharing our faith is a significant part of living missionally.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (3 mins)

'What difference would it make if you felt confident to share your faith?'

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

Imagine you were confident in what you believed, had a living experience of God with stories to tell, and felt able to share those with others – how would you feel?

VIDEO: INTRO TO THE CHALLENGES (7 mins)

The possibility and the problem
The goal of The Adventure course is to become a group of people who are able to look outwards in mission together. But to do so we all need to be confident to share our faith and talk about Jesus without fear or embarrassment.

But we experience personal barriers/challenges like fear, apathy, comfort-seeking, inadequacy and busyness.

PAUSE

EXERCISE (5 mins)

As individuals, put these in order of size of barrier (rank). If it's the biggest barrier put 1 by it and for the least put a 9 by it. Feel free to add your own under 'other'.

	Reasons I struggle to share my faith	Rank
A)	Feeling inadequate - don't know what I believe, what to say or how to say it	
B)	Busyness – life is too hectic and pressured to start spiritual conversations with people, or make new not-yet-Christian friendships	
C)	Fear – fear of embarrassment, losing friends, being rejected	
D)	Apathy & comfort – just not motivated to inconvenience myself. I enjoy my comfortable life too much	
E)	Fear of being overwhelmed with someone else's life's problems if they connect with me	
F)	Don't believe I should be pushing my views on others. If they are interested they will ask	
G)	Don't believe this is my job – it's the job of the pastor or evangelist	
H)	Don't think my life is good enough, or that I am good news. I am disqualified	
I)	Wrong personality - too shy	
J)	Other...	

DISCUSS (10 mins)

Discuss your results. Was there any common ground? Which were the most common barriers? Identify the top 3 reasons from the group.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (3 mins)

What barriers have you had to overcome in sharing your faith, and how did you do that?

PAUSE

DISCUSS (15 mins)

How do you see yourself in those stories?
What barriers in life in general have you managed to overcome in the past?
How do you think you could help each other to overcome the top barriers that you have identified in this exercise?

VIDEO: INTRO TO THE WAY FORWARD (6 mins)

We need to figure out how to overcome these to build lifestyles of mission, where we regularly experience the delight of seeing God work in the lives of non-believers, drawing them to himself, and getting to be a part of their story? This is the journey we will go on over these 9 weeks.

01. Dream
02. Delight
03. Discover
04. Dig
05. Dare
06. Declare
07. Discern
08. Disciple
09. Develop

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

Use one word to describe today's session.
Which of the 9 sessions are you most excited about and why?

ADVENTURE (10 mins)

Start as you mean to go on by putting feedback in the WhatsApp group now. This group is your regular place of connection outside of group meetings with others doing the course with you.

Find one other Christian to pray with this week (agree on who that will be now) and pray about hopes etc for the course. Do this online or in person. Discuss how you feel after praying.

NOTE – remind people about the Adventure during the week between meetings. Getting people to engage with the Adventure will be crucial for true learning, and for the group to grow in missional clarity and confidence.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 mins)

NOTE - The facilitator, or someone delegated prays for the course and the group's engagement in it over the coming weeks.

02 DELIGHT

DISCOVERING PLEASURE IN SHARING OUR FAITH

OPENING PRAYER

NOTE - The facilitator, or someone delegated prays for the meeting.

FEEDBACK (10 mins)

Feedback on last week's adventure.

VIDEO: INTRO (8 mins)

It may be hard for some of us to believe that sharing our faith can be delightful, but hopefully after coming to grips with some of the barriers that hold us back, it might seem a little more within reach.

The why of mission
What is the Biblical basis for faith sharing? Obedience is Jesus' love language, and the great commission is not the great suggestion. It applies to every believer. That's why generations of Christians like us are here today. Jn 14:15 in the NLT says 'if you love me, obey my commandments'.

Generations have obeyed the great commission. We serve at his command. But how do we 'feel' motivated in a sustainable way to do something that is at odds with our instinctive desire to protect ourselves from embarrassment or inconvenience? Let's check out our 'greats' foundation and framework first.

Four Greats Foundation and Framework



Great Commandment
Our heart's posture.
Matt 22:37-39 – the why?

Great Commission
Our heart's commitment.
Matt 28:18-20 – the what?

Great Collaboration
Our heart's need.
Jn 17:20-23 – the how?

Great Completion
Our heart's great hope.
Matt 24:14 – the 'until when'?

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

Different people in the group read out the scriptures above and open it up for a few minutes' discussion. Ask 'how can these scriptures help to motivate us to share our faith?'

VIDEO: IDENTITY (11 mins)

The 4 Greats are an important foundation for our motivation, but there are more subtle and consistent ways in which we can discover motivation and delight in faith sharing. These are rooted in our identity, i.e. how we see ourselves, our new creation identity. The starting point for all aspects of our new identity is knowing that we are utterly loved and accepted children of God. There are many, many aspects to our new identity.

Our identity is understood in the context of us being 'made in his image' (Gen 1:27). Whatever you see in the nature, character and actions of God has a connection with our identity.

For faith sharing, identity is the most powerful motivator for a lifestyle of mission. We are made in his image. Specifically: we are sent ones (Jn 20:21), witnesses (Acts 1:8) and ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20).

We are sent ones because...
He is the sent one – Jesus and the Holy Spirit were both sent. If this is part of the nature of our triune God, then it's also a part of who we are.
Jesus said, 'As the father sent me, so do I send you' Jn 20:21

We are sent because it's who we are – we get out of bed each morning asking the question, 'Who are you sending me to today Lord? Where are the people looking for you today Lord? Please lead me today Lord, I am a sent woman or man'. We are made in his image.

It's the adventure of being sent ones.

We are his witnesses because...
Jesus bore witness to the Father, he said – 'if you have seen me you have seen the Father.' Jn 14:9

The Holy Spirit bears witness to Jesus. Jesus said, 'But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.' Jn 15:26

Jesus said, 'And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.' Jn 15:27. We are made in his image.

Before he went back to heaven Jesus said, 'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses'. Acts 1:8. This is the adventure of telling what we have seen and heard. We are called to be witnesses not to do witnessing. It's who we are.

We are ambassadors because...
Jesus came from heaven to earth as the Father's representative/ambassador. We are now the body of Christ – his representatives on earth, his ambassadors. Paul said, 'We are ambassadors for Christ'. 2 Cor 5:20. We are made in his image. Accept your high calling as an ambassador representing the king and the kingdom of Heaven. Embrace the adventure.

How would you feel if each day you identified with being a sent one, a witness, and an ambassador (all reflections of the nature of the triune Godhead). Imagine you saw this as a crucial part of your identity. In other words, faith sharing wasn't what you felt obliged to do, but flowed from a deep heart-knowledge of who you are, how you see yourself, your identity.

You realise that this is who you are and so haven't got to do evangelism, but you get to be an ambassador for your faith.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (5 mins)

How has your motivation for sharing your faith changed over the years? What's changed and why?

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

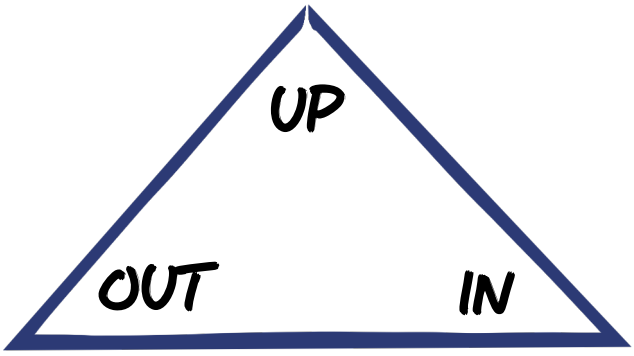
If you believed in your identity as a child of God, what difference would it make to you tomorrow?
How would seeing yourself as a sent one, witness and ambassador change the way you feel and behave?

VIDEO: BECOMING A 3-DIMENSIONAL GROUP (7 mins)

Knowing our own identity is key, but so is our identity as part of a spiritual family. We think that something that is 3-dimensional is usually going to be more interesting, engaging, enjoyable and real than something 2-dimensional. Do you remember when cartoons moved from flat 2-dimensional experience to the amazing CGI created 3-dimensional movies? A totally different experience. This is the metaphor for moving our small groups from a 2-dimensional to 3-dimensional experience. Most small groups only focus on Up and In. But we are looking through this course to build the Out dimension.

Consider the UP IN and OUT diagram below:

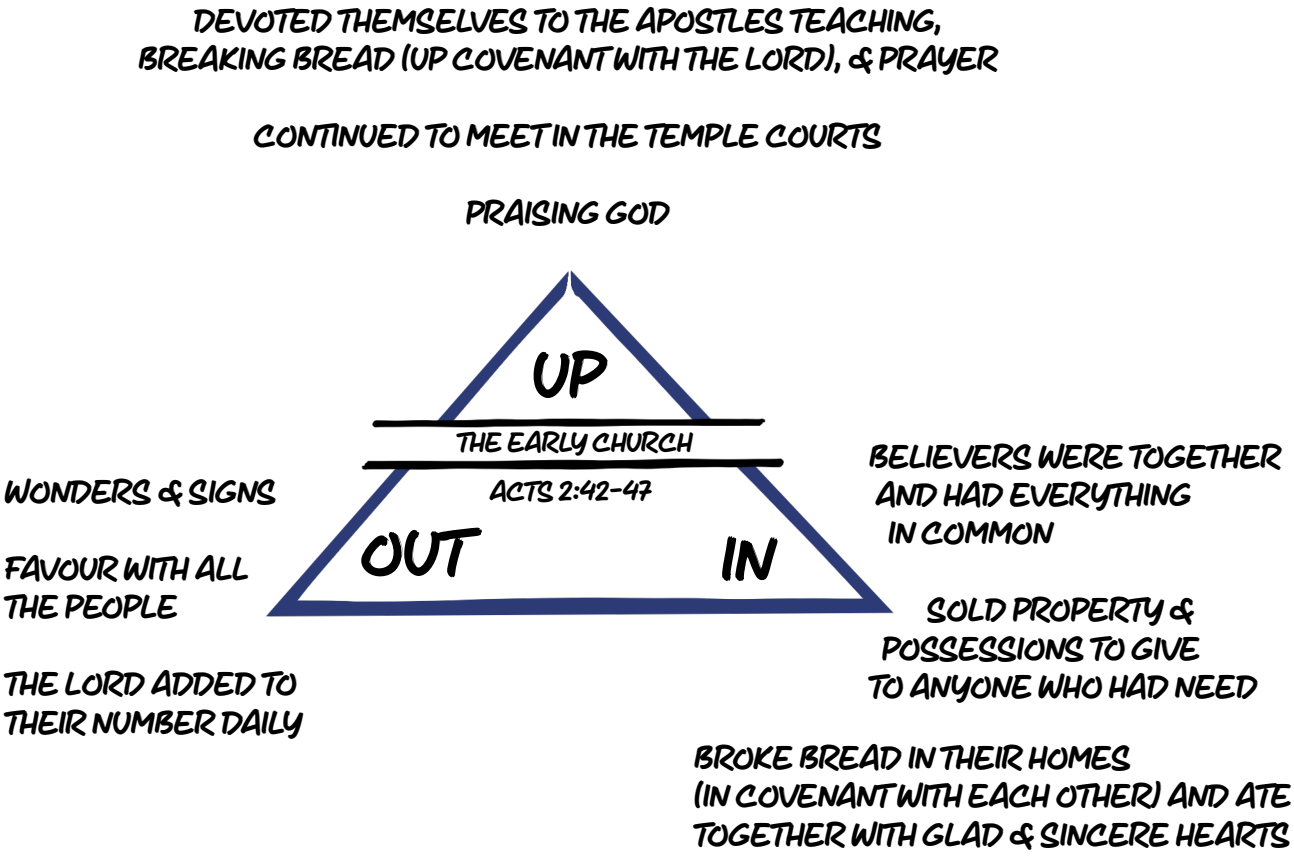
UP TOWARDS GOD =
INTIMACY & INTENTIONALITY IN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
- DAUGHTERS & SONS



OUT TOWARDS THE WORLD =
MISSION & SERVICE WHERE WE LIVE, WORK AND PLAY
- SPIRITUAL PARENTS

IN TOWARDS EACH OTHER =
FRIENDSHIP & COMMUNITY AS EXTENDED FAMILY
- SISTERS & BROTHERS

These three dimensions were the pattern of the early churches' small groups (see Acts 2:42-47)



Using the family metaphor of the New Testament we discover that we are sons and daughters of the most high God (UP), we become brothers and sisters to the rest of the body of Christ (IN), and we grow into becoming spiritual parents to those who are coming to faith (OUT). Again, it's all identity-based. It's who we are.

But embracing the OUT dimension and becoming missional is a bit like a rocket trying to escape earth's atmosphere. Initially it takes a huge amount of effort to escape the pull of gravity (in our case, the gravity of comfort, convenience and fear).

PAUSE

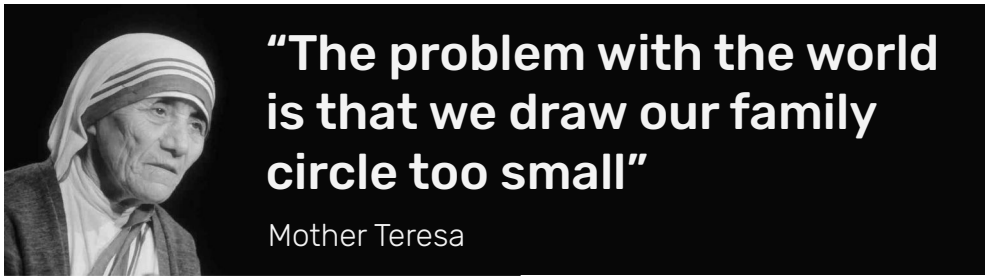
DISCUSS (10 mins)

But what happens when new people come and invade our cosy group?

VIDEO: BECOMING A WELCOMING COMMUNITY (5 mins)

The church was meant to be a welcoming ommunity. Hospitality was at the heart of its outreach.

We may find some disruption to our cosy circle, and there is a cost to welcoming new people in, but the reward far exceeds the cost.



We are a 'family on mission'. If something is alive and healthy, it is likely to grow! It's important to build a culture of welcome and expectation of growth by new people joining.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (1 min)

How easy do you find it to be part of a welcoming community?

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

How could you support each other to become a more welcoming and less insular group?

ADVENTURE (5 mins)

Take some time to meditate and make daily affirmations on the identity scriptures we have looked at this week. To meditate means to mull over, to marinate in, to play over and over in our minds whilst using our imagination. To affirm is to speak out the good things that God says about us that are true. A framework for that affirmation could look like - I am (identity statement)..... so, I get to (activity).... e.g. I am an ambassador, so I get to represent Jesus to a generation who don't know him.

Share in the WhatsApp group what you are meditating on and affirming, and if/how it is changing the way you feel about faith sharing.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 mins)

NOTE - Pray to close, or delegate to someone in the group.
For next week, the group will need access to a large sheet of paper to plot out the exercise. Some flipchart paper would be ideal, if not at least A3 size.

03 DISCOVER FINDING A COMMON FOCUS

OPENING PRAYER

NOTE - The facilitator, or someone delegated prays for the meeting.

FEEDBACK (5 mins)

Feedback on last week's adventure

NOTE - The group will need access to a large sheet of paper to plot out the exercise. Some flipchart paper would be ideal, if not at least A3 size.

VIDEO: SHARED & COMMON MISSION FOCUS (4 mins)

Shared mission focus – this is where we share each other's connections from everyday life. We create overlapping friendships, inviting our friends to the same social / seeker events. We deliberately build a network of shared 'people of peace'- people who are open to faith (Lk 10:1-11). We will make more of 'people of peace' in session 7.

Common mission focus – this is today's theme. We find a people or place to reach out to together in some kind of project. This will create an ongoing reminder that we are here for the least, the last and the lost, not just for each other. The common mission focus is not only good for meeting new people but also for building team through doing something together. The common mission focus may change over time.

For most groups the combination of common and shared mission focuses builds the missional culture that the group is trying to develop.

PAUSE

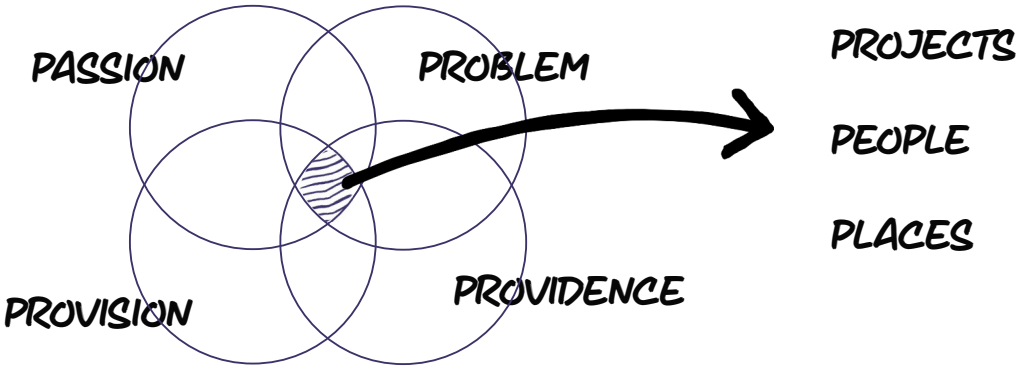
DISCUSS (5 mins)

How do we feel about discovering a God-given common mission focus for the group?

VIDEO: INTRODUCING THE 7Ps TOOL (11 mins)

This is a simple tool to help your small group, missional household, or missional community find / define / refine its common missional purpose.

THE 7 P'S OF FINDING/DEFINING/REFINING YOUR MISSIONAL FOCUS



Premise
Every group of believers living out God's life together gets to engage with the three dimensions of church life: Up, In and Out. The Out (missional) dimension is often the hardest to establish and easiest to lose. This tool helps identify and maintain this focus through regular rhythms and shared accountability.

To discover your common mission focus, consider these four key questions: (We will also see how this worked out for Jesus in Luke 4)

Passion: What are you passionate about—communities, social issues, hobbies? For Jesus, it was preaching and disciple-making (Luke 4:18).
Problem: What injustice or need do you want to address—loneliness, poverty etc.? Jesus' mission focussed on the poor, blind and oppressed (Lk 4:18).
Providence: Where is God opening doors or granting favour? Identify past opportunities. The opposite was true for Jesus in Nazareth, where there was no open door (Luke 4:28-29), which was why he went on to Capernaum where there was a wide open door for him (Luke 4:31-42).
Provision: What resources, possessions, skills or relationships has God provided? For Jesus, it was His knowledge of Scripture and the Holy Spirit's anointing (Luke 4:18).

As you plot these on the sheet of paper look for overlaps in these areas to help clarify your direction.

To define your mission, let the output from these first 4 Ps lead to a focus on one of the other 3 Ps:

Project: A specific initiative (e.g. Foodbank support, litter picking or gardening for an elderly person).
People: A people group (e.g. single parents, artists, or asylum seekers).
Place: A specific location (e.g. neighbourhood, city centre or school).

A clear, defined mission focus helps you to be intentional and see impact.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (3 mins)

How did you discover a missional focus for your small group?

PAUSE

GROUP EXERCISE (30 mins)

Draw the 7Ps diagram on the sheet. Take time for each person to share how they would answer some or all of the questions around the first 4Ps, write them on the sheet. Don't worry if there is quite a scattering of ideas, you are looking to find one that has the greatest overlap between group members and buy-in by them. You are looking for an 'it seems good to us and the Holy Spirit' moment (Acts 15:28) where you land on a people, project or place to focus on.

NOTE – Be aware that not everyone will be in the overlap or feel they are represented in the missional focus of the group. It's important to get as much ownership as possible, but it's common for one or two to feel that they don't identify with the focus of the group. It's important that they are willing to accept the direction the group takes, and give themselves to it as much as possible. They may have more influence in the future when the focus is reviewed.

VIDEO: REFLECTING ON THE EXERCISE (5 mins)

What has emerged from the exercise? What ideas are you coming up with to make a start on this mission focus? It will be experimental initially until you find what works, so don't be anxious about how successful it will be. It's important to just start, and then review and refine. Getting a date in the diary for the first activity is key to seeing it happen.

This is of course only one half of the expression of mission. The other half is the 'shared mission focus' mentioned earlier. We will be giving more skills to support this in the following sessions.

With both aspects of mission, remember the importance of doing it as a community – for mutual support and accountability. Our activities have to be built into the rhythms of our small group, including regular feedback and prayer for non-Christians (more of this in session 4), regular activities of serving or evangelising as a community, regular on-ramp activities i.e. ways that interested people can draw closer to us and the gospel, e.g. BBQs, socials, Sunday and Easter invites, Alpha courses or similar.

It's good to remember that we all have something to contribute to the mission effort. We are all called to be witnesses, but all have different personalities and gifts to bring to the group. Some will be bolder in faith-sharing than others. Some will excel in hospitality, others in planning or organising, some will be great in the practical elements of a missional project. Everyone has something to offer.

PAUSE

EXERCISE (10 mins)

Plan your next steps in your chosen missional focus. Put a date in the diary for the next activity, and also a date to review what has happened, and refine what will follow. As James said, 'Let's not be just hearers of the word, but doers also'. (Jas 1:22)

VIDEO: ENGAGING WITH YOUR GROUP (4 mins)

How will people engage with your group? People who are drawing near to Christ will want a variety of ways to connect with the church. Some will want to come to a Sunday service, some will want to come to a small group social, some will want to join an Alpha course or equivalent. And some may just be ready to join the life of your small group.

Remember for many people in today's culture, they will want to belong before they believe. We must make space for them to do that. Many are attracted to the family culture of the group. For some it's the first time they will have experienced a genuinely loving community. They may just want to be with you before they become like you. And that is OK. The blessings of the gospel include forgiveness, freedom, fulfilment and family. They may buy into family before the other aspects of the gospel.

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

What kind of spaces or opportunities could you create or use to help people on their journey towards faith?

ADVENTURE (5 mins)

Pray during the week, and put on the WhatsApp group how you think you could make your best contribution to the common mission focus.
What missional gift can you contribute to the group?

CLOSING PRAYER (5 mins)

NOTE - Pray to close, or delegate to someone in the group.



04 DIG

PREPARING THE SOIL TO RECEIVE THE SEED OF THE GOSPEL

OPENING PRAYER

NOTE - The facilitator, or someone delegated prays for the meeting.

FEEDBACK (5 mins)

Feedback on last week's adventure

READ

NOTE - it's helpful when reading round the room to all use the same version of the Bible.

Read the parable of the sower, Matt 13:3-23 – Begin by reading the scripture round the room. Then read this summary.

There are 4 kinds of ground. The path (rock hard, nothing can penetrate, birds immediately devour the seed). The stoney ground (shallow roots, seed may germinate but doesn't thrive, eventually dies off). Thorny ground (weeds grow up alongside the seed and choke it off). Good soil – allows the seed to grow and become very fruitful, 30,60 and 100-fold, i.e. multiplication occurred.

DISCUSS (10 mins)

1. What is the seed in this parable? See v19

2. Do you think these depressing results from sowing are inevitable, or is there anything we can do to change the quality of the soil?

3. In agricultural cultures, as in Jesus' day, ploughing was vital before sowing the seed. What might the spiritual equivalent to ploughing be?

4. If prayer is a key, what might the obstacles / blockages be that we need to pray about to see more of our sowing of the gospel bear fruit? Look at Jesus' explanation of the obstacles in the parable in v19-22.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (2 mins)

What experience have you had of persevering in praying for a non-Christian friend or family member?

VIDEO: PERSONAL AND CORPORATE PRAYER (5 mins)

We use the keys from the parable of the sower to pray for the ground to be prepared to receive the seed and bear fruit, both in private prayer times, and when praying together.

Both praying on your own and with others is important. Note the additional

power of praying with others. See Matt 18:19. The word for 'agree' here is not simply agreeing to agree on something we want God to do, but it is the agreement of a whole orchestra finely tuned, playing in harmony under the conductor. It is a whole community sharing lives in harmony, being led by the Holy Spirit. The Greek word for agree is 'symphoneo'. As in the English word symphony. Be inspired to build that kind of community in your small group, and imagine how God might hear and answer your prayers!

PAUSE

DISCUSS (5 mins)

What is your experience of praying with others? How has it helped, and what have you found difficult?

VIDEO: PRAYER OF 5 (3 mins)



This simple tool will make a significant difference to your prayer effectiveness and faithfulness.

This is a simple way to help you identify those who God is laying on your heart, and who you want to see come to faith. They could be new people you have just met, longer standing friends or family members.

The idea is to pray each day for God to awaken desire in them to know God, to open their eyes to spiritual reality, for them to become convicted and convinced of the need for a saviour, and for God to create opportunities for you to connect with them, and potentially share your story or God's story with them (more of that in sessions 5 and 6).

Remember if he creates an opportunity, it's up to you to take it! You can buy some of the pre-printed Agape bookmarks, as in the link here https://arc.a-gape.org.uk/buy/five-in-focus/
Or you can make your own!

It's good for your own personal prayer times, but also for when you pray in 2s and 3s. It will be helpful to have an opportunity to do this each time you meet as a small group.

PAUSE

LISTEN AND SHARE (10 mins)

Have a go now at listening for God to bring people to mind, and then share them with the rest of the group. Take a couple of minutes and ask God to bring specific people to mind. Write down their names.

Then spend time in groups of 2-3 praying for those people, especially that they would become curious about faith / Jesus.

VIDEO: PERSISTENT PRAYER AND PRAYER AS WARFARE (5 mins)

Jesus said that we need to persist and persevere in prayer. See Lk 11:5-13, Lk 18:1-8.

The book of Revelation uses the picture of bowls of incense in heaven, filled with the prayers of the saints. Pete Greig, creator of the prayer course and founder of 24-7 Prayer, suggests that as these bowls fill with prayers, they gradually reach a tipping point when they are poured out, releasing God's interventions on earth. It's an encouraging idea that will help us persevere in prayer for our friends who are not yet following Jesus.

Eph 6:10-20 is Paul's famous passage on the battle we are living in, and the armour we need for that battle. It culminates with the encouragement to pray. 18' And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.'

Prayer is spiritual warfare. For this reason, we should not be surprised when we face disappointments, setbacks, discouragements or outright opposition. 2 Cor 4:4 says that the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving. It is a battle to see that blindness give way to the light of the gospel.

For this reason, we need to pray regularly to be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will give us courage and power to be his witnesses (Acts 1:8). We need his power to overcome the obstacles, to keep going when we feel like nothing is happening.

Praying for our friends to come to know Jesus is always 'according to the will of God'. In 1 Tim 2:4 we are told that 'God wants all men and women to be saved'. And because we know that we are praying according to the will of God, we know that he hears us (1 Jn 5:14-15). So, take heart, be filled with courage and boldness like the first disciples (Acts 4:29-31).

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

Recall when you have experienced obstacles and setbacks in prayer. Could these reflect something of the battle we are in or the need for persistence? What approach could you take in the light of this?

ADVENTURE (5 mins)

Craft something like a bookmark or something you can stick to the fridge that you will use to remind you of the 5 people you are praying for on a daily basis. As you pray for them, also pray that you will have opportunities to connect with them or chat with them. Note what if anything happens and be ready to report back next week.

NOTE - Ask everyone to bring pen and paper to the next session on telling our story. And bring some extra paper and pens for those who want some but forget to bring it.

Total 62 mins without the prayer walking section. The prayer walking session

that follows is composed of 12 mins of video and 35 mins of practical. You can either watch the video section now and do the practical at another time. Or you can save the video section to watch before you go prayer walking. Or if time permits you can do both as part of this session. If you delay the walking make sure you fix a time when everyone can make it to do the prayer walk and be part of the debrief.

VIDEO: PRAYER WALKING (7 mins)

Prayer walking is a powerful way of breaking up the hard ground and seeing people become more spiritually curious and open to Jesus. As the Lord spoke to Joshua, 'Every place the sole of your foot treads, I have given to you.' (Josh 1:3)

You may have adopted a geographical area or people group for your 'common mission focus'. If so, why not set some time aside for the whole group to prayer walk the area where you meet, or where the people group you are trying to reach are typically found. Prayer walk in pairs, pray out loud if you feel able (it just looks like you are having a conversation). Keep your eyes open, literally and metaphorically! Ask God what he wants you to notice.

Pray into any issues that God seems to bring to mind. Pray for any people in the area that you know by name, pray for shops, businesses, schools etc. Pray for opportunities to be a blessing to the area, serving people with kindness. Pray for opportunities to share your story or the good news about Jesus with those who live in the area. If you meet people on your walk, be friendly and say 'Hi, how are you doing?', you never know if a conversation might develop. If you are feeling bold, you could always say that you are praying for the neighbourhood, and ask if they have anything you could pray about for them.

To make it more fun, and include kids, you can use multicoloured M&Ms to pray for a different topic for each colour. Each participant has a mini bag of M&Ms (or similar).

Select 5 topics, one for each colour, and when you pick one from the bag, use that to pray for the related topic. E.g. red for people, yellow for light to break into the homes you are passing, green for the environment you are walking through, brown for health, blue for jobs and education for the area, orange for spiritual protection. You can make up your own categories.



- PEOPLE
- LIGHT TO BREAK INTO HOMES
- THE ENVIRONMENT
- HEALTH
- JOBS & EDUCATION IN THE AREA
- SPRITUAL PROTECTION

This is a great resource for prayer walking produced by Houses of Light. It is downloadable. https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/70773835/a-mile-with-jesus-booklet

If you'd like to find out more about being a House of Light on your street, to sign up to prayer for your street regularly and look for ways of being a blessing to it, Check out the Houses of Light website www.housesoflight.net



VIDEO: VOX POPS (2 mins)

What has been your experience of prayer walking?

PAUSE

PRAYER WALKING (20 mins)

Take at least 20 mins to prayer walk the area you are in. Keep your eyes and ears open for things that God might bring to your attention. Be open to pray for people, homes, businesses, schools etc. Ask God for his insights as to how to pray.

DEBRIEF ON YOUR EXPERIENCE OF PRAYER WALKING

Finish any prayer walk with a time of debriefing with the group – what did you see, hear and experience as you prayed? Did anyone sense anything interesting or significant about the area? Did you end up having any significant conversations with people you met? Consider if you might want to incorporate prayer walking into the future rhythms of the group. One of the questions it would be good to ask is, 'What does the good news look like to this area?' This will help you reflect on how to reach out to people in this area.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 mins)

NOTE - Pray to close, or delegate to someone in the group.



05 DARE LISTENING TO THEIR STORY, TELLING OUR STORY

OPENING PRAYER

NOTE - The facilitator, or someone delegated prays for the meeting. Remind people that they will need their pen and paper (some might want to use a device, which is also fine). Offer some to any who have forgotten it.

FEEDBACK (5 mins)

Feedback on last week's adventure

VIDEO: INTRO (3 mins)

We want to become good news people. People who are good news to be with. People who are full of love, humour, concern for others and interested in their lives. Those who show curiosity and confidence to share their faith. In other words, those who show the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

People may have the right to ask, 'if your faith is such good news, why do you never talk about it?' Many are put off by what they hear about the church (in general), but are genuinely drawn towards Jesus when they see his life in us. Why are we hiding our light under a bowl? According to Jesus, we are the light of the world.

Matt 5:14-15
14 'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.'

We've looked at the many reasons we are shy about our faith in session 1, but now it's time to look at some simple ways of making our faith known. We are going to look at 2 simple tools to do so over these next two sessions. These tools can be used with people who are long term friends, or people we meet and may never see again. The only difference is how we approach using them.

PAUSE

DISCUSS (5 mins)

How do we feel about becoming good news people?

VIDEO: LISTENING TO OTHERS' STORIES (4 mins)

We need to listen deeply and be curious about others and their stories. This is a way of showing true love. It also helps us understand their context, and in what way the gospel might be good news to them. If they are on their own and feeling isolated, then the gospel as an invitation to a family will be good news. If they are struggling with guilt and shame, then the gospel as forgiveness and healing of shame will be good news. If they are bound up with many fears or addictions, then the gospel as freedom from and victory over the power of darkness will be good news. Etc.

PAUSE

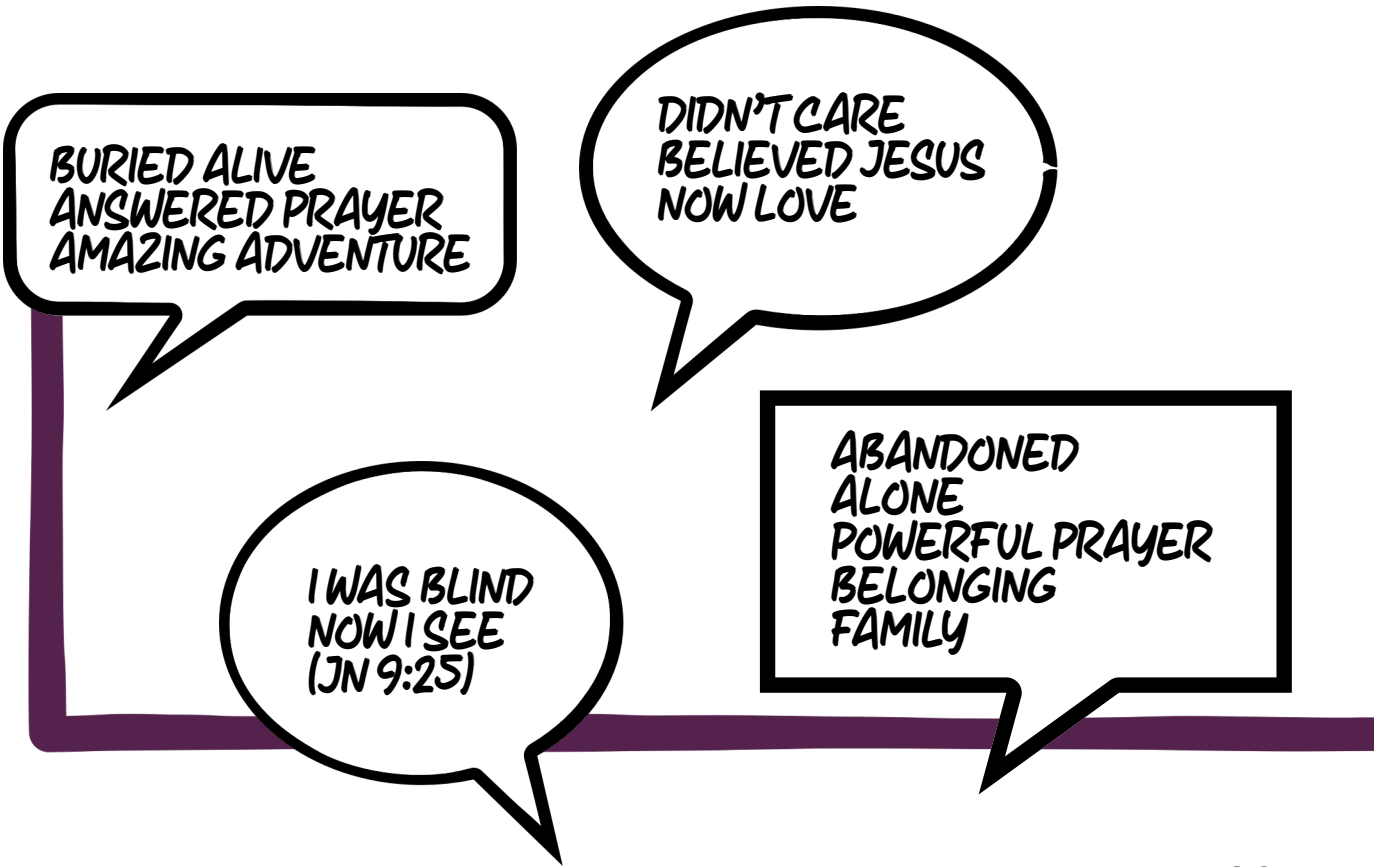
VIDEO: TELLING OUR STORY (11 mins)

Our 6 word story
Rev 12:11 says that our testimony is a powerful weapon in our hands. So, let's learn to use it well. Testimony is a legal word that is used to describe someone's account in court of what they have seen or heard (also the role of a witness in court). And that is what our story is – simply our experience. And no one can argue with that!

So, how do we tell our story?
Naturally – no religious jargon
Spontaneously – as a natural part of a conversation when the opportunity arises. Flexibly – adjusting it to the person we're speaking to and the context of the conversation. Briefly – better to leave them wanting more than boring them, and inviting curiosity.

Here is a simple way to learn to tell your story in this way. Divide your story into 3 parts:
- What life was like before you came to Christ
- How you came to Christ
- What difference that has made to your life

Identify 6 words that best summarize your story – this could be 6 individual words, 3 pairs of words, one sentence, or any combination. Imagine your story is in 3 to 6 paragraphs, what would the headings of those paragraphs be? The idea is to give yourself hooks to hang your story on and help to keep you on track when you might otherwise lose your way mid-story.



Then work on fleshing out the story with narrative that is interesting, without any religious jargon. If possible, include somewhere what you discovered about Jesus that made you want to follow him, or in the case of someone who's been a Christian all their lives, what you realised about Jesus that made you want to give him your whole life.

You want to be able to tell your story in 2-3 minutes. Either write it down or record it on your phone. And then practice, practice, practice. Your aim is to be so fluent with your story, that all or some of it fits naturally and easily in any conversation, without really having to think about it.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (3 mins)

What is your 6 word story?

PAUSE

PRACTICE (55 mins)

Now take time to each work out your 6 words that you want to use as a framework, these are the set of prompts that you will use to tell your story. Think about the big sections of the story, think about the most memorable bits, think about the parts that might have the greatest impact on the hearer.

When you have those 6 words, then start to put some bullet points down for each one that help you expand the story.

Practice talking it through to yourself, then practice on one another, giving feedback that encourages and suggests ways it could be improved. Feedback especially on anything that doesn't make sense or sounds like religious jargon. Aim to keep the story to under 3 mins.

NOTE – if time get one or two of the more confident ones to share their 6 words and then their story with the whole group.

ADVENTURE (5 mins)

Why not practice telling your story with a not-yet-Christian friend this week. Explain that you are trying to get better at telling your story of faith, and want someone to practice on. If they agree, perhaps over a coffee, or beer, see if you can have a go at telling it in under 3 minutes. When you have done this, ask if it made sense. Ask if there were any words or phrases that sounded weird or religious. Ask them what they thought of it.

One helpful way-in to sharing your story is to take advantage of any opportunity when someone asks you a question about yourself. If it is a question that allows, simply respond with something like, 'That's a great question, can I just tell you my story?' People nearly always say 'yes.'

NOTE - Make sure you have the 4points wristbands and prayer cards ready for the next session.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 mins)

NOTE - Pray to close, or delegate to someone in the group.

06 DECLARE

SHARING GOD'S STORY

NOTE - Give out the4points wrist bands and prayer cards when you get to that place in the session. We suggest one wristband and 3 or 4 prayer cards (gospel explanation cards with a prayer of commitment) for each person. You or they can always order more from the4points website www.the4points.com

OPENING PRAYER

NOTE - Facilitator or someone delegated prays for the meeting.

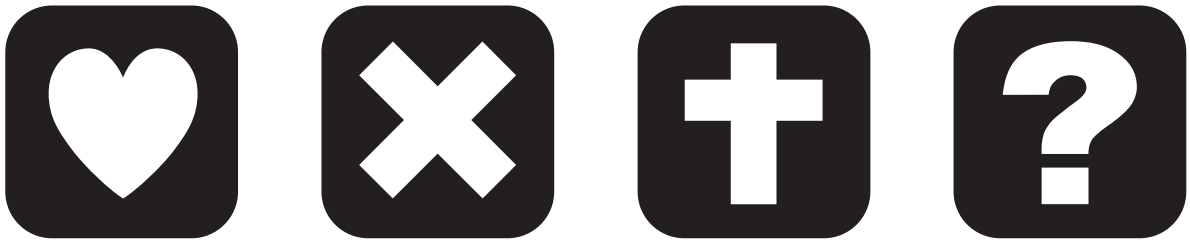
FEEDBACK (10 mins)

Feedback on last week's adventure

NOTE - Hand out the wristbands and prayer cards and explain briefly the meaning of the 4 points. 'God loves me. I have sinned. Jesus died for me. I need to decide to live for God.'

VIDEO: DAVE SHARPLES, the4points FOUNDER (12 mins)

'It is the Bible in 4 points.'



The 4 points
- God loves me
- I have sinned
- Jesus died for me
- I need to decide to live for God

Starting a conversation around the 4 points can be done in many ways.
- If you've shared your story, it's easy to say that these 4 points are the basis of what you have come to believe
- If you want to you can actually craft your story around the 4 points
- If someone else is wearing a wristband of some sort, ask them what theirs is about and then ask if they have seen the one you are wearing. Usually they say 'no', and you can ask them to guess at what it is about, finishing off the explanation when they get stuck
- Or if bold, you can just start the conversation by saying, 'have you seen these 4 points before, it's the Bible in 4 points', and carry on from there.

These 4 points are the big story of the Bible, and also the story of redemption through the cross. As the conversation unfolds, it's easy to start to unpack the points with a bigger explanation. See the prayer card for more simple ideas on this, or go to the4points.com website for a fuller explanation.
https://www.the4points.com/uk/about_the4points.php?page=PT1 .
You can craft your own explanation as you become more confident.

As I mentioned, the 4 points is also a way to share your story, you can weave your story around the 4 points, explaining how you came to experience the love of God, realised you needed his forgiveness (or how he met your other felt needs, e.g. freedom, family and fulfilment), and how you have been working that out having decided to follow him.

Always carry a 4 points prayer card on you. Not only is it a way of leaving the gospel with them, but you can also use it to go through and explain the points. The other big plus to using the prayer card is that it has a prayer of commitment to Jesus on it. If they are obviously ready to give their life to Christ you can ask if they want to pray that prayer. If not you can let them know that the prayer is on the card.

PAUSE

PRACTICE (40 mins)

Practice sharing the gospel story with each other using the 4 points. Let one or two try sharing with the whole group. Give each other feedback.

VIDEO: BEING GOOD NEWS CHRISTIANS & DEALING WITH DIFFICULT QUESTIONS (7 mins)

We want to be, do and say the good news wherever we live, learn, work or play. We have focussed here on saying the good news, but being the good news is about being the kind of person that is worthy of respect, living a life that demonstrates integrity, humility and love. Doing the good news is about demonstrating the good news through acts of service and kindness. Both of these give us the credibility to be saying the good news when we get the opportunity to share with others.

The challenge and privilege of being good news Christians is so much easier if we are prepared. Remember that in the armour of God in Ephesians 6:15, the shoes we are to wear are the preparation or readiness of the gospel of peace.
NIV: 'and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace'
NASB: 'and having strapped on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace'



VIDEO: VOX POPS (2 mins)

What was your experience of using the4points?

Dealing with difficult questions
NB 40% of Christians don't have conversations with not-yet-Christians because they don't feel able to answer difficult questions. (Talking Jesus survey 2022). So just be prepared to say, 'I don't know'. The questions aren't usually deal-breakers, and are often deflections from the person's real issues. You can follow this with, 'But what I do know is ...' and then include some or all of your story.

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

How do you feel about wearing the wristband and using the 4 points to share the heart of the gospel, or as the basis for sharing your story?

ADVENTURE (5 mins)

This week is your chance to have fun with sharing the gospel using the 4 points. If you are wearing the wristband for the first time you may be asked about it. Even if you are not, you can ask people if they have seen this before. Then ask them if they can guess what they mean. When they have finished their attempts to explain, you can jump in with, 'Can I explain what they mean, and why they are so important?'

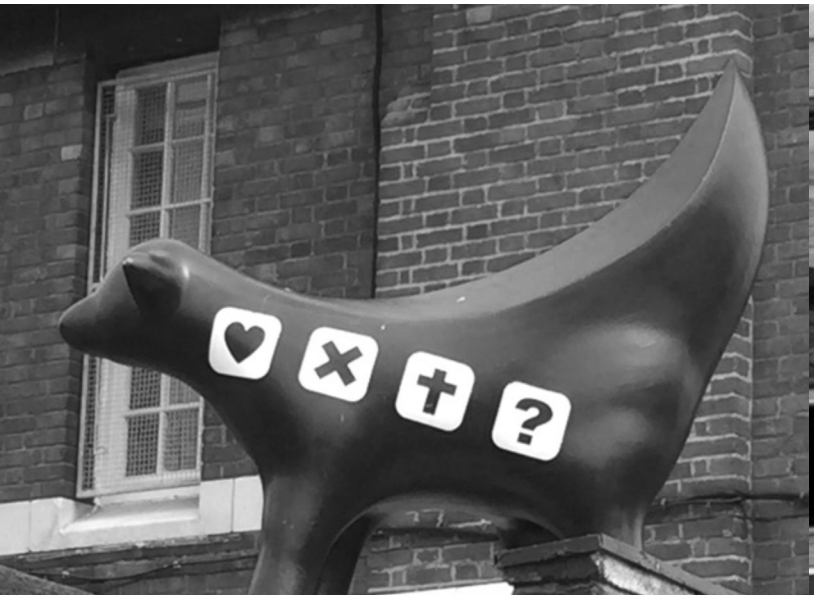
Don't forget to weave in bits of your own story if you can. If they respond very positively be ready to invite them to something e.g. a Sunday service, or another space where they can explore faith.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 mins)

NOTE - Pray to close, or delegate to someone in the group.



VISIT
the4points.com





07 DISCERN

FINDING PEOPLE WHO WANT TO HEAR

OPENING PRAYER

NOTE - Facilitator or someone delegated prays for the meeting.

FEEDBACK (10 mins)

Feedback on last week's adventure

VIDEO: INTRO (8 mins)

Today's tool to help find people of peace can be a real game changer to how we feel about living a missionary lifestyle. It can transform it from pressure, guilt, duty or fear, to delight, anticipation, adventure and peace.

The basic idea is taken from Luke 10:1-11 where Jesus sends out the disciples in pairs (remember we are in this together, mission is not a solo occupation). Let's look at a few verses from this passage.

v2 'He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."'

So, the problem is not the harvest field, but the number of workers. This is where you and I come in. We have ignored those around us, or kept quiet in self-protection, not allowing those who are open to the good news to discover us.

v5-7 'When you enter a house, first say, "Peace to this house." If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.'

The greeting of 'Shalom', translated here as peace to this house, doesn't really give the full flavour of the greeting. In effect it's saying, 'May the complete blessing, protection and provision of God, come to this household'. If the person accepts the blessing (promotes peace), then the disciples are instructed to 'Stay there'. Those who welcome us and are open to receive what we say are what we call People of Peace.

When we find a person of peace, we are told to stay with them. In Jesus' day it was literally to stay in their home, preaching the kingdom of God and healing any who are sick, v8-9. People of peace are also often those who open a doorway to others such as their wider family or group of friends.

Conversely, if the people don't receive the blessing we want to give them, then we are to move on, v10-11.

This is the key. We are to look for those who are open to spiritual things. There are many conversations you might have that expose whether someone is open to a spiritual conversation or not. You could talk about going to church. You could ask if they have ever prayed. You could share something that God has recently done in or through your life. You could ask if they have anything you could pray for. But one of the best ways I've discovered is to see what

happens when I share my faith story with them (as in week 5). People of Peace usually 'lean in', ask questions, or somehow show obvious interest. These are the people that I want to invest most time in, just as Jesus instructed his disciples. "Stay with this person". It's not wrong to spend more time with some people than others. It's what Jesus and his disciples modelled.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (2 mins)

What has been your experience of finding people of peace?

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

Have you ever met people of peace, if so what was your experience? Did they show spiritual openness? Were you able to engage with them spiritually in some way?

VIDEO: HOW TO FIND PEOPLE OF PEACE (9 mins)

Here are 3 simple ideas to help you find People of Peace, and turn each day into an adventure. Start by praying each day, asking God to show you any People of Peace.

- BE FRIENDLY
- BE CURIOUS
- BE READY

Be friendly. Just start by saying 'Hi, how are you doing?' to everyone you meet, or come into contact with. You never know what will start from a simple greeting. Why not set yourself a daft goal of saying 'Hi' to everyone you pass!

Be Curious. One of the greatest ways you can love someone is to show a genuine interest in their lives. And when time permits, and the conversation has developed, we can simply find out about the person we are with. Do they have family? Where are they from? What job do they do? What team do they support? Etc.

You see, when you show genuine interest in others, it's quite likely that they will reciprocate with some kind of personal question about yourself. It's the most natural thing in the world to simply say 'Tell you what, can I just tell you my story?' And so we come to the third key.

Be ready. Be ready with your story. We have talked about developing your 6 word story and it is easy to follow it if appropriate with, 'Do you have any kind of faith yourself?' Eph 6 speaks about having our feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace. We need to be ready and equipped. Who else in life, embarking on an important endeavour, wouldn't prepare for it. Imagine not preparing for an exam, a driving test, a job interview, or a holiday. We wouldn't

dream of it. Why not spend time, as we have started to do through this course, in preparing ourselves. And 'practice makes perfect'. Be ready with your story. Be ready with the 4 points.

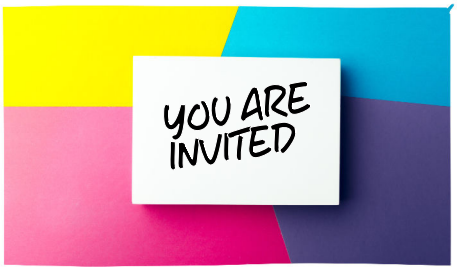
PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

Did someone invite you to church or a Christian event at the start of your faith journey? Did you say yes, and if so why?

VIDEO: THE POWER OF INVITATION (14 mins)

Here are 3 simple ideas to help you find People of Peace, and turn each day into an adventure. Start by praying each day, asking God to show you any People of Peace.



According to a Tearfund survey in 2025, 3 million people in the UK are waiting to be asked to come to a church service or event. Here are 10 widely accepted reasons people don't invite others to church, or to a Christian event.

1. We believe that church is primarily for Christians.
This wouldn't be a common objection, but there are certainly some people who feel this way.

2. We have asked all of our friends already.
There's only so many times you can ask, and if you've asked all of your friends this number of times, where to next?

3. We don't know anyone who isn't a Christian, or we don't know any unbelievers well enough. Sadly, it is all too easy to only associate with other Christians. If you don't know people who aren't Christians it's difficult to invite them to church. Sadly, it's generally true that the longer someone is a Christian, the fewer not-yet-Christians you know. Or we might know people who aren't yet Christian but feel that the relationship isn't at a deep enough level yet for us to invite them to church. For example, I have a friend who won't invite others to church until he's had them to his house for a meal.

4. Our friends live too far away.
For many of us, work provides some of the best opportunities to develop deep relationships with unbelievers. But in cities especially, our colleagues often don't live near us, and we usually live close to the church. It's difficult to ask a colleague to travel a long distance to come to church - especially if we hope they will begin attending regularly. We may have to look at creative alternatives to inviting to our own church.

5. We don't think our friends would like it.
It's easy to invite a friend to an event you are pretty sure they will enjoy. It's much more difficult if you fear they won't enjoy it.

6. We wouldn't be able to look after them.
We might be so involved in helping in Sunday services in church each week (this is often the challenge in smaller churches), that we fear we wouldn't be able to sit with them and look after them if they came.

7. We aren't confident they would be welcomed.
If we bring a friend will anyone speak to them? A friendly welcome by someone who isn't on staff is, after all, the best way to welcome people to church. But what if no one talks to them and they feel ignored?

8. We aren't confident the service or other Christian event will be good.
There have been moments for all of us when something has happened in church and we've breathed a sign of relief and thought "I'm glad I didn't invite someone to church today." We need to be confident that the service will be good. We're willing for the gospel to offend our unbelieving friends. We're less tolerant of other elements turning them away from Jesus. Some moments are unpredictable. Churches with a culture of people bringing their friends often seem to invest a lot of time and energy into the quality of their church services. However, we've also known of friends coming with us to church and it's felt like a disaster. We talk to them after the service and they have loved it and been really touched by God.

9. We don't know how to ask a friend to a Christian event.
Sure, we could just say "Jenny, do you want to come to church with me this Sunday?". But at what point in a conversation is this question appropriate? The mechanics of the 'ask' can be difficult. How about a pre-invite 'if I was ever to ask you to come to church with me, might you be interested?'
10. We are afraid of what they might think, say or do if we asked them.
Most of us feel this to some degree, and when we do we need to be reminded to not be ashamed of Jesus. And ironically if they do come, and subsequently become a Christian, will we then feel responsible for nurturing them and helping them deal with their issues? We may fear being overwhelmed. Fear of rejection is always huge. For more information on creating a culture of invitation see Michael Harvey's book 'Unlocking the Growth'.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (2 mins)

How did you feel when you invited someone to a Christian event, service or group, and they said 'Yes'?

PAUSE

REFLECT (2 mins)

Which are your top three reasons for not inviting?

DISCUSS (15 mins)

What stops you inviting people to church? Which areas are the most common? How could we overcome the most common obstacles? Have a brainstorm.

ADVENTURE (5 mins)

Pray and ask God to put someone on your heart to invite to church or an event. Then approach them this week and just ask 'If I were to ever invite you to church (or Alpha or whatever), would you be open to that?' Use the WhatsApp group to report what happens and be prepared to share next week.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 mins)

NOTE - Pray to close, or delegate to someone in the group.

08 DISCIPLE

GROWING NEW BELIEVERS

OPENING PRAYER

NOTE - Facilitator or someone delegated prays for the meeting.

FEEDBACK (10 mins)

Feedback on last week's adventure

DISCUSS (10 mins)

What is your definition of a disciple?

VIDEO: INTRO (16 mins)

Discovering your missional calling and identity as a group, growing in gospel confidence and missional competence as individuals is all well and good, but the hope is that people will come to faith and be added to the group.

This is a great joy and privilege, but there are three challenges to be aware of:

1. They will disrupt the comfortable set of relationships that exist
2. They will need help to grow as disciples. And this requires some time, energy, commitment, inconvenience, and acceptance of mess and potential disappointment!
3. We need to know what to do with them, how to help them.



That's what this session is about.

Three things to think about:

1:1 Mentoring – every new Christian will need someone to spend 1:1 time with, especially in their first 6-12 months. The main thing here is to reassure them about what they have done in becoming a disciple and to answer their questions as best as you can.

They will need to understand their new identity as a Christ follower and child of God. They also need someone to show them how to read the Bible and pray. They will need to develop some simple prayer and Bible reading practices and you will need to do it with them initially.

Group activities – much discipling should take place in the context of the group. This will involve shifting some of the way the group works to enable the new believer to grasp what is going on and how they can join in. The group needs to go out of its way to make the new person feel welcome, to avoid overly religious language, and to demonstrate how the Christian life is lived.

NB The new Christian will still hopefully have lots of not-yet-Christian friends and family. This a great opportunity for others in the group to reach out to them with the new Christian, and to invite them into a journey of faith too. It's also a great opportunity for the new believer to share what has happened to them with others outside the group.

Discipleship content - The scope of this course is not to provide detailed discipleship content, but every group needs to figure out what a new believer needs to know and do. Remember that the Great Commission was to 'teach them to obey…', (Matt 28:20) not to teach them to have a head full of knowledge! What the new believer needs will change as they grow in maturity from a spiritual infant to a spiritual parent. Note the progression here in John's first letter.

1 John 2:14
'I write to you, children, because you know the Father. I write to you, fathers (and mothers), because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men (and women), because you are strong and the word of God remains in you, and you have conquered the evil one.'

Our task in making disciples is to see someone come to faith, and then help them grow from a spiritual child into a spiritual young adult, and then into a spiritual mother or father. In other words, to grow from a disciple into a disciple maker.

There are many definitions of what a disciple is. Here are a few:
- A follower of Jesus
- A learner (the literal translation of the Greek word for disciple, the word 'mathetes')
- Someone who grows to become more like Jesus in their Character and Competencies
- John Mark Comer says a disciple is 'an apprentice or follower of Jesus, who strives to be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus did.'
- Someone who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus

As you can see there are lots of overlaps and similarities. It's important that we adopt a definition that we are happy with, otherwise we don't know what we are aiming to grow.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (1 min)

What was your experience of either being discipled as a new Christian, or of discipling a new Christian?

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

- What helped you grow when you were a new Christian?
- What experience have you had in discipling a new Christian? What were the highs and lows of that experience?
- If you have never done this, how would you prepare to do so if asked?

VIDEO: STEPS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS (30 mins)

This is not a programme to follow, or a course to use, but a set of fairly obvious ways in which we would want a new baby Christian to grow.

You will need to figure out which materials you want to use. These are simply some of the landmarks you may want to include on your discipling journey.

Some of these may be done 1:1, some in a group, and some through other activities of your local church. Be sure to discuss this with whoever oversees your small group. If a number of groups are going through this process, there is probably a need to liaise and work together on the resources you will need. We have suggested one or two specific resources you might find helpful.

Things to be aware of when discipling a new Christian:
1. Make sure they know just how loved they are.
Everyone longs to love and be loved. Some find it hard to receive love or believe that they are loveable. Explore with them the scriptures that talk about God's love, and use some of the gospel stories to give examples of Jesus' love in action.

2. Help them discover the adventure of being used by God to bless others.
We all want to be useful. We all feel good when we recognise that God has used us. They will have friends or family who are hurting. Help them to imagine how they can show and share the love of Jesus. Ask them what they would like to do about it.

3. Show them how to pray.
God loves to speak to us. He said to his disciples that his sheep (followers) hear his voice (Jn 10:27). Give them a simple model of prayer.
The simplest of all is probably Sorry, Thank You and Please
- Sorry - for things I have done wrong (confession)
- Thank you - for all the blessings in my life (worship)
- Please - asking for my own and others needs to be met (petition and intercession)

The Lord's prayer is one pattern that many people will be familiar with. Help them to unpack this in terms of;
- Hallowed be your name = thanksgiving praise and worship
- Your kingdom come = praying for others' needs, for justice, for God to break into difficult situations, for people to come to Christ (prayer of 5)
- Your will be done = giving our lives to God that day, for him to have his way
- Give us this day our daily bread = ask God for all we need
- Forgive us our sins = pausing to ask the Holy Spirit to remind us of anything we have thought, said or done that we know is wrong. Ask him to forgive us
- As we forgive others = ask the Holy Spirit to show us if we need to forgive anyone else, and if we do, forgive them
- Lead us not into temptation = asking God to keep us away from temptation, but to lead us in his will and way, e.g. to find people of peace (week 6)
- But deliver us from the evil one = protection from all the devil's schemes
- For yours is the kingdom etc = finish with more praise and worship

4. Show them how to study the Bible on their own and in a group.
Help them to recognise God speaking to them. Give them a simple overview of the books of the Bible. E.g. The New Testament, gospels and letters. The Old Testament, history books, psalms, prophets etc. Explain that Christians believe that the Bible is inspired by God, and essential for Christian living. Suggest a

simple and easy to manage reading plan. Show them how to use the YouVersion Bible app, if they are technically confident. Suggest some questions to ask when they are reading scripture, that will help them reflect on what they are reading, e.g. What does this passage tell me about God and people? Are there any promises to claim or warnings to obey? If this is God's word, how can I be putting it into practice? Explain how some verses will 'stand out' as they are reading, and will probably be God trying to get their attention (speak to them).

Consider introducing Discovery Bible Study practices that teach Christians to allow the Holy Spirit to be the instructor when studying the Bible together. There are many variations of DBS. It's tried and tested in disciple making movements all over the world Here is a link to one version. https://www.dbsguide.org This is a great tool for 'teaching them to obey...' Matt 28:20

Another online Bible reading and reflection resource:
Lectio - https://www.24-7prayer.com/resource/lectio-365/
YouVersion group Bible study feature - the ability to 'add friends' to share Bible reading plans with friends and groups. https://www.youversion.com/the-bible-app/

5. Help them understand how important it is to be part of a group of Christians, both small and larger expressions.
Everyone knows that Christians and church aren't perfect, but they are God's gift to us, just as imperfect human families are intended to be a blessing but often get it wrong. It's important that they understand and discover that they have a part to play in the church. Give some examples in your own life of how church has been so important to you.

6. Encourage them to begin to share their faith with family and friends.
Hopefully the new Christian's family and friends have noticed that something has changed. This is the perfect opportunity to begin to talk about what has happened. Help them to grow in confidence to share their faith (see ideas in session 5) Why not encourage them to use the prayer of 5 practice (see session 4).

7. Help them consider changes they might make to become more like Jesus.
Jesus talked about 'being in the world but not of it'. He was talking about staying embedded in lots of relationships with not-yet-Christians, but not copying their behaviour or culture. In fact, we are meant to be distinctively different. Ask them if God has been speaking to them about changing any areas of their lifestyle, priorities or relationships. Support them in acting on these. Receiving Jesus as Lord as well as saviour, means letting him shape our lives from here on.

8. Start working with them to discover how God has gifted them and what he has called them to do.
Discovering God's direction for our lives is exciting and may lead to some new choices. As they discover their God-given gifts they will be keen to use these to serve God in work, family and in the church. Help them to see that their work is important to God.

Saddleback Church's SHAPE test is a good way to help people discover their gifts and callings. The book is here; https://www.amazon.co.uk/Finding-Fulfilling-Your-Unique-Purpose/dp/0310292484 and the online test here. https://www.freeshapetest.com

You can also access a free online test for assessing your Ephesians 4 ministry gifts / motivations / preferences here. https://fivefoldministry.com

9. We are all broken and in need of healing.
People suffer from all sorts of hurts, habits and hang-ups. God is ready to start a healing and 'fixing' process in our lives. He wants us to be whole, free and fulfilled. As the new Christian starts to share their own struggles and becomes more honest we have the opportunity to speak truths from God's word about their new identity, about his love for them, and their place in God's family.

Some will struggle with jealousy, low self-esteem, anger, feelings of worthlessness, pride and fear, and can be tackled with the simple application of biblical truth. Sometimes there are more profound and serious issues that require more support. E.g. Addictions to substances or pornography, problems with eating disorders or suicidal thoughts. Some will have other serious mental health issues. And these may need specialist help. We mustn't be afraid to ask for that help and direct people accordingly.

Your church may have access to professional counselling help. If not, consider whether professional help is appropriate. Faithful Counselling is one online Christian counselling service. For some, specialised prayer for inner healing may be helpful, such as through Bethel Sozo UK https://www.bethelsozo.org.uk/in-person-sozo/.

10. Give them realistic expectations of the ups and downs of Christian Life.
Some days people feel on the mountain-top of experiencing God, some days it may feel like God has left the room, and other days are just pretty normal. Our feelings are just how we feel, they don't define what is true. Helping people to navigate the changing emotions is part of their discipleship. But it's important for them to understand that when they fail, God is ready and quick to forgive when they ask. Keeping short accounts with God will help each new believer to grow strong and stable in their faith. Help them to see that the believers in the New Testament experienced trials and sufferings, but yet grew closer to God and stronger in their faith.

For lots of groups you may have never had to think these issues through, so it might be good to bookmark this content for when you need it

PAUSE

DISCUSS (15 mins)

- How do you feel about making disciples of those who come to faith, and the need to free up time to invest in them?
- How could you reprioritise your life to create time and space to make disciples?
- If you feel anxious about or resistant to this, what is causing that anxiety or resistance?

ADVENTURE (5 mins)

This week identify how you personally want to grow as a disciple and post it on the WhatsApp group. Suggest one action you could take this week to help put that into

CLOSING PRAYER (5 mins)

NOTE - Pray to close, or delegate to someone in the group.

09 DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE GROUP PATTERNS

OPENING PRAYER

NOTE - Facilitator or someone delegated prays for the meeting.

FEEDBACK (5 mins)

Feedback on last week's adventure

VIDEO: INTRO (6 mins)

Summary of previous 8 weeks:



1. Dream – consider 'what could be?'
2. Delight – discovering pleasure in sharing our faith
3. Discover – finding a shared missional focus for the group
4. Dig – preparing the soil to receive the seed of the gospel
5. Dare – listening to their story, telling our story
6. Declare – learning to share God's story
7. Discern – finding people who want to hear
8. Disciple – growing new believers

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

Which week was the most helpful, or the most challenging, and why?

TODAY'S SESSION

9. Develop - creating a sustainable lifestyle and pattern for group life.

VIDEO: EMBEDDING LEARNING (10 mins)

Doing the course will not automatically turn your small group into a missional force to be reckoned with, unless you continually practice and build what you have learned into your lifestyle and group rhythms. There is an Aesop fable quote that says, 'After all is said and done, there is more said than done!' Pray God that this is not true of your group. May we be 'doers of the word'. James 1:22

We talk about the magic sauce of intentionality and accountability...
Intentionality says... 'I will or we will...' It is a commitment to action.
Accountability says... 'Ask me next week about what I said I'd do this week'.
We are much more likely to put things into practice if we know someone is going to lovingly ask me how I'm getting on.

Think of the power of Weight Watchers or AA.
In fact the 3 key 'abilities' of the disciple are:

1. Teach**ability** – hopefully having done this course you have demonstrated this and will continue to do so along with other members of the group. It's a commitment to lifelong learning. It's at the heart of what a disciple means.

2. Avail**ability** – we are not 'our own' anymore, we make ourselves available to live as 'obedience-based disciples', not 'convenience-based disciples'. We cannot become disciple makers without freeing up headspace, energy and time.

3. Account**ability** – willingly asking others to hold us accountable for pursuing this 'obedience-based' discipleship lifestyle of intentionality.



VIDEO: VOX POPS (1 min)

How has being in an accountable relationship been of help

PAUSE

DISCUSS (10 mins)

Break into groups of 2 or 3 and discuss how you could grow in the 3 abilities. Which are you most likely to struggle with?

FEEDBACK (5 mins)

Feedback to the group.

VIDEO: RHYTHMS (23 mins)



Agree the rhythms of the small group
It is good to put regular rhythms of practice into the life of the small group. For example: (these are just examples – it's important that you figure out what you want to do)
- Weekly, pray for our prayer of 5
- Have a short time of feedback at the start of each week, giving each person the opportunity to share how they are getting on with missional living or specific accountability from the previous week
- Initially, get a different person to tell their 6 word story each week
- Two-weekly, you could do a Discovery Bible Study, teaching new and more mature believers how to hear and obey the voice of God for themselves, and increase the opportunities for peer accountability.

Here is another link about Discovery Bible Study (DBS) https://discoverapp.org/discovery-bible-study This is also linked to an app (the Discovery Bible app) which can be downloaded and used for DBS

- Monthly, engage in a missional project
- From time to time ask each other 'who are we discipling'?
- Invite seekers to small group socials monthly or termly e.g. BBQs, Games nights, Alpha courses, Sunday services or whatever you use as an on-ramp for not-yet-Christians
- Monthly, prayer walk your neighbourhood or people group you are reaching out to
- Termly, review where each of us is growing as a disciple
- Termly, ask 'how are we doing?' in maintaining our outward focus
- At least annually, review your common mission focus. Is it still the right one?

All of these are just examples, but hopefully you get the idea. Put 5 or 6 regular rhythms into the meeting pattern of your small group, and keep reviewing them.

PAUSE

DISCUSS (20 mins)

What rhythms do you want to build into the regular life of your small group? Bring your ideas and then ask the small group leader/s to make a plan for the next term, and share it on the WhatsApp group for all to see. This can be something that everyone in the group holds the group to be accountable for.

ADVENTURE (5 mins)

Now is the time to start living the missional lifestyle to the full. Aim to put one thing every week in the WhatsApp group that demonstrates you are putting stuff into practice.

Use the start of every week to give time to feedback on missional living in general, and any specific points of accountability. Let this at least be one of your rhythms!

NOTE – it's vital that you or whoever is the group leader from here on ensures that the rhythms are put into practice and kept to. It's vital that there is a culture of mutual accountability for living missional lives and sharing in missional projects.

Without the rhythms, regular review, and mutual accountability the group will not succeed in having the Adventure of a lifetime. If you want the group to have the joy of new people being added, and disciples being made then these things are non-negotiable.

VIDEO: GOODBYE (1 min)

We hope you have enjoyed this course and can see your group going on a great adventure. Please do share any feedback or stories of encouragement with us, and do ask any questions you may have.

Nic Jennie xx

Nic Harding and Jennie Johnson

THE ADVENTURE

The Adventure is a nine session course which will equip your small group to embrace its missional calling and focus.

PALAU UK/EUROPE

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palau.org.uk

CITY REACHERS

This course is a resource of Kairos Connexion (Kx) and the City Reaching stream.

kairosconnexion.org/city-reaching

CONTACT

Please give your feedback of any encouraging experiences/ stories during or after this course by sending a short paragraph to Nic at nic@kairosconnexion.org.uk