



Session Three: Putting the E-word on the Table!

“In your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect ...” *1 Peter 3:15*

GOAL

To explore good and bad evangelism approaches. What has given evangelism such a bad name? Is not proclaiming the Good News a biblical option?

Practice Review

- Who did you NOTICE over this past week?
- Who did you give Generous Attention to?
- What did you observe?
- What did you notice about yourself?

Telling Our Stories

- Share a story about a birthday party that stands out in your mind – good or bad!
- What made it good?
- What made it bad?

Read

MESSAGE OF ANTIOCH FOR TODAY (RESOURCE #3)

- How do you respond to the statements about “*a legacy of bad news*” and “*leaves a bad taste*”?
- Does that resonate with your experience; similar, or not at all?
- What words would you use to describe your feelings about sharing your faith with those who are not Christians?

Explore

Video clip: *Bad Evangelism*

- Were you able to watch all the way through that without someone yelling, “shut it off!?”
- In light of the video clip, can we share some stories about our best and worst experiences with ‘evangelism?’
- What has your experience been?

Read

RECLAIMING THE E-WORD (RESOURCE #4)

- What do you think of Stone’s question, “Is it possible nonetheless to reclaim the E-word as expressing something positive, vital and beautiful about the Christian life?”
- What would it look like to rethink and reconstruct evangelism for this era?

Romans 10:14-15

- So, “to proclaim” or not “to proclaim”? What do you think?

Connecting Word and Deed

We want to develop habits and practices that help us to connect our desire to live as godly, loving Christians (deeds) alongside our desire to communicate to others the “good news” that we have found in Jesus (words). These practices are spiritual discernment exercises. We need to learn how to pay attention to what God the Holy Spirit is already doing in the lives of the people within our spheres of influence. **Our task is not to “evangelize” our friends; our task is to bear faithful witness as we participate with what God is already doing in their lives.**



The Practice: Prayer

We have begun *Noticing* – paying attention to the people around us. Do you have any inclination of needs or concerns in the life of the person(s) you have been noticing?

The Kingdom practice here is to open up a dialogue with God about the people in your life – to pray for them.

Engage in *unauthorized prayer*. Think about this sad reality... there are literally thousands of people in our city or town who face all of life’s challenges alone! They have no one taking them and their concerns to God! You may be the only one doing that. Take that responsibility seriously. Don’t wait for permission. Be faithful.

This practice promotes action. Love is a verb. And praying for someone is the first step in loving them. This practice also promotes co-labouring with God. God seems to intentionally leave certain jobs undone in order to include us in the work that God is doing in the world.

Assignment: This week. When God brings someone to your attention - pray about what you see, what you sense. Don’t make a big show of it. Take them to God.

Who are the people in your life that you have been noticing? Would you like to invite them to this table? What concerns do you need to pray about in their lives? Let’s begin to pray together for those whom we have been noticing.

Prayer

God of the Assignment: God of the Universe – who notices us – we come to you in Jesus’ name, asking on behalf of our friends. Father, I would like to see _____ in this family circle one day. God, as we co-labour together in the life of my friend, will you continue to draw him/her to Jesus, and to the same renewal of spirit that I have found in relationship with You. Amen.