



## Session Four: Evangelism – We’ve come a long way, baby!

“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*

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### GOAL

*A conversation about the history of Christian witness. What has “Proclaiming Good News” looked like through 2000 years of Christian community around the world?*

### Practice Review

- Who did you PRAY FOR over this past week?
- What kind of things did you pray for? Did you have “a sense” of how you should pray for them?
- Was it just a couple times, or more often?
- Is there a connection between who you have been NOTICING and who you have been PRAYING FOR?

### Telling Our Stories

- Share a story that illustrates how Christians have paid attention to you in your life? Or not?
- What is it about Christian community that attracts you? Or not?

**Video clip:** *Early Church Witness*

### Read

#### BEARING FAITHFUL WITNESS IN THE EARLY CHURCH (RESOURCE #5)

- Thinking of your own faith journey, which of these factors played a role in your decision to follow Jesus? How would you rank the importance of each of these factors that were crucial for people coming to Jesus in the Early Church era (*scale of 1 to 5*)?

### Explore

**Video clip:** *Evangelism Legacies*

- Which of these approaches to evangelism concerns you, or has been how you ‘*understand*’ evangelism, for better or worse?
- With all this legacy of “*bad evangelism*” why has Christianity continued to spread around the globe? Has there really been *nothing* good?

## 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.**