2. Sharing your faith

Learning Objectives

- Explore and understand what evangelism is.
- Explore how God helps us to share our faith.
- Help participants identify and articulate their testimony.

Welcome [5 mins]

Welcome the group to this session, recap on last week's session and review how the challenge went.

The challenge was to share the Gospel with someone, it didn't have to be a Christian. It was all about getting confident in sharing the Gospel.

🏓 **Bonus Game:**
Select a game that will best suit your group and setting. Consider games that fit with the theme of the story, sharing or giving something away.

> ***Pray for the session***

Introduction [12 mins]

Ask: What is the most exciting thing you have ever done?

In this session, we are going to look at what it means and looks like to share our faith.

🕹️ **Game: Just a minute!** *Based on the Radio 4 game show, challenge participants to talk on a subject for 1 minute without any hesitation or repeating what they have said before. If they do hesitate or repeat themselves, other participants can challenge them, and they must then talk about the subject for the rest of the time. The person who finishes the minute wins. Repeat this a couple of times. Example subjects: Instagram, Climate Change, McDonalds, Netflix, Football.*

When we are passionate about something, we find it easy to talk about it. Why then, when it comes to sharing our faith, do we seem to find it so hard? In this session, we are going to look at what is evangelism, what is our story and how can we can share it with others.

📖 **Read: Matthew 28:19-20** "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Christians refer to this as the Great Commission. Jesus tells us that we shouldn't keep this Good News to ourselves. We should be sharing it with everyone we can!

> **Story: Ice cream in Africa**

> There's a beautiful true story of a Christian from England who flew over to Africa. Whilst there, they got to know one of the local children who was around 9 years old. This Christian felt moved to buy the boy an ice cream. This child had never tasted ice cream before and was so excited about it. When he finally got it, this child slowly licked the ice cream and experienced the sensation of the sweet sugar on his tongue and the cold, refreshing cream in the blistering heat was so exhilarating. So much so, that he ran to his mates in the village and made sure all of the children (and there was around 15 of them) got a lick of this ice cream!

> Considering that this was his first-ever ice cream and was one of the best things he had ever tasted, he could've kept it all to himself. However, he chose to share the amazing goodness of ice cream with those around him, so they too could experience what he had experienced!

> This story is a simple but beautiful illustration of why we too should be sharing the Good News and not keeping it to ourselves. The difference between the ice cream story and our story is that the boy just had an ice cream whereas we have the gift of eternal life and love!

Bible Focus [25 mins]

Ask: What is an evangelist?

Sometimes we think an evangelist is someone who shares the Good News in the street standing on a box, or who knocks on people's front door. However, 'evangelism' simply means to bring or announce Good News. So, sharing our faith and being an 'evangelist' can be done in lots of different ways.

Testimony: Sharing our faith

Ask a leader to share a story when they shared their faith with a stranger in a natural way. For example, whilst they were shopping, and they felt prompted to share their faith with someone.

Then ask a leader to share a story when they shared their faith with a friend or family member. For example, over dinner or during a club they attend.

Both these stories are examples of how evangelism doesn't have to look outrageous, it can be as natural as saying hello to someone.

Ask: What things stop us from sharing our faith?

Are these reasons or just excuses?

A reason is something that is very justifiable, but an excuse is something we need to ask forgiveness for and help with. If we told Jesus that we are scared, would he say, “That’s okay, you don’t have to try anymore.”, or would he more likely say “Thank you for being honest with me. I forgive you for being afraid. But let me help you overcome your fear.”?

📖 **Read:** Philippians 4:13. "*I can do all this through him who gives me strength.*"

This should encourage us. None of our reasons should stop us from obeying the commands of Jesus to go and make disciples. We can all succeed at sharing our faith. Success doesn’t mean converting everyone you speak to – not everyone you share your faith will become a Christian. Being obedient to Jesus is what matters.

Some of our friends from YWAM have a saying “*Simple obedience changes history.*”***[1]***

You may never know the outcome of your obedience, but we would probably be amazed how many times little things we did have helped someone take a little step closer to God

[1] YWAM Circuit Riders

📖 **Read: John 14:15-17.** "*“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be[c] in you.*"

After Jesus left, he sent us the Holy Spirit to live within us and provide all the protection and guidance we need.

A great course on sharing your faith, called Living & Telling, define success in sharing our faith as “taking the initiative to talk about Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.”[1] That’s it!

[1] Living & Telling Journal page 7.

Bonus: – How to share your faith [10 Mins]

So how do we share stories? It's simply just sharing what you know.

Activity: Sharing what you know
Send a leader out of the room and play the video. Then invite the leader back in and get the young people to share what happened in the video.

Video: "**The Black Hole"** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5_Msrdg3Hk

Ask: How did you find retelling what happened in the video?
It's easy! All you did is share what you knew, had seen and experienced.
We all have a story to tell. All of our stories are unique and powerful testimonies. Our stories are the way we connect and relate to one another. Your story with God is unique, special and amazing!
And that's how we share our faith. We share what we know, what we have seen and what we have experienced. You know the Gospel, you have seen what God is like and you experience him personally every single day.

In the last session we looked at "the Gospel" and how we can use "The Four Points" as an easy way to share it with others. Another effective way to share our faith with others is to tell them about our experience and our story of becoming a Christian. Christians often call this our "testimony".

Sharing your testimony is effective for a couple of reasons:

- It helps people to relate the good news to real life and more importantly their own life.
- It can show how following Jesus isn't just a set of beliefs, but how it makes a difference to real lives.
- It is non-confrontational. It is very hard to argue with. It's your experience, it happened.
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We will have different opportunities to share our stories. This might be with people you know well such as our best friend or a family member, or it could be with someone on the street or at a sports club whom you don't know well. You might have a lot of time to share your story when you are sat with a friend at a coffee shop or just a few moments when talking to someone at school/college.

Testimony [3 mins]

Have a leader share their testimony in 30–60 seconds. Then ask the same leader to share their testimony in 3 minutes.

Bonus: – [3 Mins]

ASK:
- What made up the leader's story?
- What do you think were the key parts?
- How were the two different?

Did you notice:

- Like all stories, there was a start, middle and end?

- They described what life was like **before** they became a Christian, which helps people connect and relate to you.
- They then shared how they **became a Christian**, which shows people how they can too. (Many people have never known a time when they weren't a "Christian", but in everyone's story there is a moment where they choose to make a significant step to commit their life to God.)

They then shared what life is like **after** becoming a Christian, which shows the impact God can have in our lives and ensures the story focuses on God and not you.

Application: [20 mins]

We're going to practice sharing our story. This isn't about creating a "script" or a "patter" we use every time. We want to be able to share naturally and confidently. The best way to do this is actually to practice ahead of time and to think through "What are the most important parts of my story that I want to remember each time I share it?".

Activity: Discover your story – 2 minutes

Ask the participants to write a couple of words or notes down in their journals for each of these sections of their story, (it doesn't have to be full sentences, just enough to help them remember):

- What was life like before walking closely with Jesus?
- What changed? What happened? How did you become a follower of Jesus?
- How was life different after becoming a Christian?

Activity: Sharing your story

Remind the group this is a safe place; it is a bit of fun and there is no pressure or need to get it perfect.

Divide the group into pairs, preferably someone they don't know that well in the group. Take it in turns to time each other trying to share their testimony in less than 1 minute.

Rearrange the pairs and try again but including a little more detail and keeping their testimonies under 3 minutes.

Bonus Content: Role Play [10 minutes]

Keep the group in pairs, name one person A and the other B.

Hand each person A a note which will tell them who they have to pretend to be. Person B needs to share their testimony and the gospel with person A and try to answer their questions or objections.

After 5 minutes, hand notes to each person B and the roles should be reversed.

The three scenarios are:
- A family member who is an atheist and believes there is no God and that science explains everything.
- A friend who believes there might be a God but that we can't tell if any religion is the right one.
- Someone in the street who thinks every faith or religion leads to God eventually and we just have to try and be good people.

Bring the group back together

Ask the group: How did you feel about sharing your testimony?

Jesus wants us to share our story with others and to share the amazing Good News! Our story is significant and powerful and helps others see God's goodness at work in real life.

Conclusion & Challenge [2 mins]

Hopefully, this session has encouraged you that not only is it simple to share your faith, it is also really exciting. There are so many opportunities to share your faith and it doesn't have to be complicated.

And remember the story of the African boy who was so excited about the ice cream, he had to share it with everyone around him. We have something even better than ice cream; we have an amazingly loving God!

Challenge: Share your story

Last week's homework was practising sharing the Gospel with someone. This week's challenge is to share your story with someone, this time try and share with someone who is not a Christian and make sure you include the Gospel.

> ***Pray to end the session***