



God's Good News

This Leader's Guide will help you to deliver teaching and leadership about God's Good News. Sessions at the Clergy College will also help you to lead this session.

AIMS

- To provide participants with an opportunity to discuss their own experiences of 'evangelism'
- To practise answering the question 'Why am I a Christian?', preparing participants to be able to account for their Christian hope.

RESOURCES

- A room with comfortable space for all participants
- Bibles
- Handouts and pens

SESSION PLAN

- The timings are flexible and intended to allow plenty of time for discussion.
- A Powerpoint presentation is also available: please ask the AMD Programme Coordinator

A. Experiences of sharing Good News

Up to 15 minutes

- **ACTIVITY:** Plenary (or smaller groups of about five if lots of people or if that works best with your group)
 - **ASK:** Who has experienced sharing the Good News / evangelism or been on the receiving end of someone sharing it? What was it like? *Up to 5 minutes*
 - **ASK:** What is sharing Good News? *Up to 5 minutes*
 - **SUMMARISE:** different experiences of sharing the Good News, either as a sharer or receiver; wide ranging views of 'evangelism'; contested relationship with 'mission'; Good News of *Jesus*. *Up to 5 minutes*

B. Practising evangelism: 'Why am I a Christian?'

45 minutes including activities

- Brad Kallenberg has some evocative metaphors to help us understand evangelism in his book *Live to Tell: Evangelism for a Postmodern Age*.
 1. Sailing not proofreading - latter involves ensuring something is to a standard; sailing needs to be experienced.
 2. Questing not archery - not target practice but journey in which outcome is not obvious at the beginning.
 3. Acting not cobbling - shoes exist independently of the action. Actions are constituted by and help constitute my character. Evangelism is self-involving.
 4. Medicine not parallel parking - not 'works every time technique' or flowchart to cover every eventuality, but expert knowledge.
- He also says this: "Anything worth doing is worth doing badly—until one can do it better"
Brad Kallenberg, *Live to Tell*, p.124.



- The reality is that we often have amazingly little time to respond to someone if they ask a question about faith. Perhaps only one minute before the conversation returns to the latest soap or football result.
- St Peter wrote this: “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” (1 Peter 3.15)
- So we need to put ourselves where the other person is, responding with appropriate language and context, not with a dense or complex ‘theology of everything’.
- St Paul was having a difficult time and was being persecuted for his faith. Misunderstood and facing adversity he wrote to Timothy saying: “I know the one in whom I have put my trust.” (2 Timothy 1.12)
- He wasn’t secure in the knowledge of the four steps to salvation. He didn’t count on his years of theological training, celebrating Mass every day or even on having been baptised in the Church of England. All these things may help us; but they are not necessarily the same as knowing Jesus.
- And, in any case, our sharing of the Good News must be *ours*.

- **ACTIVITY:**

Individually:

allow 4-5 minutes

- Draft an answer to the question “Why are you a Christian?” that lasts no longer than one minute (in other words, you’ve got one minute to get your answer across).

In pairs:

allow 4-5 minutes

allow one minute for first person to share their answer; allow a minute for ‘hearer’ to note down key points from what they heard; then swap roles

- Share your answer with another person (in pairs)
- If you are the ‘hearer,’ note the key points that you heard in the other person’s statement.
- Swap over roles.

In pairs:

allow 10 minutes

evaluate what you have heard using the following questions *allow 8 minutes*

- What was the core message communicated?
- Was the message coherent? Why / why not?
- What questions might the message provoke?

In plenary: allow and encourage everyone to participate

allow 20 minutes

- Discuss how it felt to give an answer to the question ‘Why am I a Christian?’
- Comment upon how it felt to be evangelised
- Think about how what was said was ‘Good News’
- Identify lessons for *our* evangelism

- ‘Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have’ (1 Pet. 3:15).

C. Summary

5 minutes

- Talk about ways in which we are laying the foundations for becoming evangelists
- Talk about how confidence comes from preparation
- End with prayers for strength, confidence and desire to share the Good News.