

Way of Discipleship Small Groups

Helpful reasons for mission and faith sharing



Touching base (5 minutes)

Open in prayer as is helpful for your group.

If this is your first session take time to introduce yourselves and set any ground rules you want to for your time together.

If you met previously take the opportunity either as a group or in pairs to check in with each other about how your response from last time has gone.



Introduction: the purpose of this session is to think about why we should want to join in with mission and share our faith, and the best kinds of attitudes to have in doing so. The session is very simple - to read each side of the handout in turn and discuss together what encourages us and challenges us.

Opening question(s) (5 minutes)

What might hold us back from engaging in mission and/or sharing our faith?



Understanding the information (40 minutes)

Start by reading through the helpful reasons for mission and faith sharing, then discuss which reasons encourage or challenge people. Then do the same with the attitudes for mission and faith sharing page.



Reading the Bible (15 minutes)

Read 1 Corinthians 9: 20-23 in which Paul shares his heart for mission.

Discuss the Discovery Bible Study questions:
What does this passage teach me about God?
What does this passage teach me about people?
How does this passage call me to obey God?
What might I do in response to this this week?



Responding to God's leading (5 minutes)

Give people an opportunity to think about, "What might God be showing me and how might I respond?" They may like to write this down and/or share it with the group and/or share it with one other person. A friendly question is to ask each other, "Is there anything that would be helpful to ask you next time?"



Group prayer (5 minutes)

Lord you have created me to do You some definite service.
You have committed some work to me which You has not committed to another.

I have my mission.

I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.

I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.



You have not created me for naught.

I shall do good; I shall do His work.

I shall be an angel of peace,

a preacher of truth in my own place,

while not intending it if I do but keep Your commandments.

Therefore, I will trust You, whatever I am,

I can never be thrown away.

If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve You,

in perplexity, my perplexity may serve You.

If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve You.

You do nothing in vain.

You know what You are about.

You may take away my friends.

You may throw me among strangers.

You may make me feel desolate,

make my spirits sink,

hide my future from me.

Still, You know what You are about.

John Henry Newman

HELPFUL REASONS FOR MISSION AND FAITH SHARING:



BECAUSE THE END-POINT OF DISCIPLESHIP IS TO IMITATE GOD

shaping our lives around what He does.

Our mission is based on who God is and what He does. God is a missionary God – He came to us in Christ. Jesus always went to others and responded to their needs.



BECAUSE THE MORE WE JOIN IN WITH GOD, THE MORE WE CAN BRING PLEASURE TO HIM

“So we make it our goal to please him...Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others...For Christ’s love compels us...” (2 Corinthians 5: 9-14)

BECAUSE IT IS A RESPONSE TO WHAT WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM THOSE WHO SHARED FAITH WITH US.



BECAUSE EACH GENERATION NEEDS TO RECEIVE THE GOOD NEWS IN THEIR OWN WAY.

“... every generation has its own unique questions. The gospel must constantly be forwarded to a new address, because the recipients are repeatedly changing their place of address.” (Alan Hirsch)

BECAUSE WE THRIVE WHEN WE ARE PART OF A PURPOSE

bigger than ourselves.

Our original purpose was to “be fruitful” and reflect God in the world. We were blessed in order to be a blessing to others. A balanced life includes “acting justly”.



BECAUSE JESUS COMMISSIONED HIS DISCIPLES TO CARRY ON HIS WORK

saying “Seek the kingdom” over a hundred times and “Go and make disciples” three times.

BECAUSE THE MISSION OF GOD HAS A CHURCH

As the church we are apostolic and called out.

The Church is the fruit of God’s mission, but also the agent of it. Together we are Christ’s body in the world.



BECAUSE OF THE DESPERATE NEED FOR HEALING AND GOD’S LOVE IN THE WORLD.

BECAUSE MISSION AND FAITH-SHARING IS AN EXPRESSION OF GOD’S PROMISED FUTURE AND A WAY TO MAKE THAT FUTURE REAL NOW.



BECAUSE JOINING IN WITH GOD’S MISSION AND SHARING FAITH HELPS US TO MEET WITH AND DRAW CLOSER TO GOD

St Francis said those in need are like a sacrament to us.

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in...” (Matthew 25:35)



HELPFUL ATTITUDES IN MISSION AND FAITH SHARING:



OUT OF LOVE FOR GOD

"We love because He first loved us." (1 John 4: 19)



WITH LOVE FOR OTHERS

"Missionary zeal does not grow out of intellectual beliefs, nor out of theological arguments, but out of love." Roland Allen

GOING TO OTHERS AND ADAPTING TO THEM

"I become a Jew to win the Jews." (1 Cor 9: 19-23).

STARTING BY LISTENING

"Just as love of God begins with listening to his word, so the beginning of love for our brothers and sisters is learning to listen to them." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer).



ASKING MORE QUESTIONS THAN GIVING ANSWERS

"In the New Testament Jesus asked 183 questions, gave three answers, and answered 307 questions with a question in return. The point of this approach is to allow the natural curiosity of the human person to draw him or her to an encounter with the person of Jesus." (Sherry Weddell) (Who are you? Where are you? Why don't you?)

SEEING WHERE GOD IS ALREADY AT WORK

Where are those who are of "peace" towards God?

KNOWING AND SHARING MY STORY WITH VULNERABILITY AND HONESTY.

BEING PREPARED TO LEARN FROM OTHERS, WHATEVER THEIR BACKGROUND OR BELIEF.

HAVING HUMILITY IN KNOWING I AM NO BETTER OR WORSE THAN OTHERS.

HAVING MY WORDS AND ACTIONS FOLLOW THROUGH FROM EACH OTHER.



BEING PREPARED TO EMBRACE THE COST AND RISK OF REJECTION.

"Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours."

Teresa of Avila

