

2. Knowing and Explaining the Gospel

Main message: Let's be prepared to communicate the essentials of the Gospel of Jesus.

Recap from session 1: Do you have a sense that your way of thinking is being recalibrated to the Great Commission?

As leader of the discussion, you may want to ask one or two in advance to be willing to share; perhaps also give an example of heart change from your own life.

Opening question: Apart from the Good News of Jesus, what is the best news you ever heard?

Question: If you were to meet someone in Edinburgh who didn't know the Good News of Jesus and they asked you what you believe, what would you mention?

Split into groups of 3 and practise on one another for 5 minutes. It might be that you have people in your group who don't yet know Jesus, so there's no pressure for everyone to answer this question!

Scripture: Read **1 Corinthians 15:1-6** together.

Question: What does Paul include in his summary of the Gospel?

Jesus died for our sins and was raised to life again. The crucifixion and resurrection are historical events which had witnesses.

Question: Why do you think these core events are "of first importance"?

*V.1. We are saved through faith in this message.
V.2. We need to hold on to this message which we have believed.*

We are called to proclaim the good news of these core events. Speaking of "our church", "my faith" and even "God" may give helpful entry points to talk about Jesus but God empowers us to witness to the core events which form the good news of God's rescue plan.

Eternal life is made available only through faith in Christ and his death and resurrection.

Bear in mind that there may be people in your group who are exploring faith. This question may present a Gospel opportunity!

Scripture: Read **Titus 3:3-7** together.

Question: How does Paul's teaching to Titus differ from his proclamation of the core events that we have just read in 1 Corinthians 15:1-6?

Titus already knows the core events. Here, Paul is reminding and explaining why Jesus died and rose again. We need to be ready to witness to the core events, and as we have opportunity, explain God's purpose. We witness to many and explain to any who are open.

Once we know the Good News, we are instructed to share it!

Scripture: Read **1 Peter 3:15** together.

Question: Why would someone ask you to give a reason for the hope that is in you?

They already know you have hope. Perhaps due to how you live your life, but more probably because you've already told them! Freely sharing the hope that is in you with others will lead to opportunities to explain that hope.

Question: How can you cultivate an attitude of eagerness to share the Good News more often?

We're looking here for how we can partner with the Holy Spirit in changing our hearts.

Question: Practically speaking, is there anything you could do to be more 'prepared' to give the reason for the hope you have?

We're looking here for more concrete actions that people could take to be ready to tell others the Good News. This might look like regularly practising telling people the basic Gospel. Or it might be ensuring you are putting yourselves in contexts around people who don't yet know Jesus. It might be increasing your confidence in the core events of the Gospel by memorising some of the passages we have looked at tonight or reading a book to better equip you to share the Gospel clearly (see book recommendation below).

Prayer in small group: Read **Colossians 4:3-4** and spend some time praying that prayer for one another. "Pray that (we) may make (the Gospel) clear, which is how (we) ought to speak."

Great Commission challenge, part 1: Tell someone who doesn't yet know and follow Jesus that you're a Christian.

Great Commission challenge, part 2: Ask them if you could briefly share with them what you believe (the Good News of Jesus) and then ask what they think. You could even tell them you're doing this as part of a course you attend! Just imagine what might happen if many in King's told the Good News of Jesus to just one person this week.

Leader, you may want to remind the group of these activities during the week!

Book recommendation: *Confronting Christianity* by Rebecca McLaughlin.

(<https://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/confronting-christianity>)

Named "2020 Book of the Year" by Christianity Today, and apologetics and evangelism book of the year by The Gospel Coalition. Christian *apologetics* is the part of Christian theology that defends Christian faith against objections.