

WEEK 4: TEACH EFFECTIVELY

LEADERS RESOURCES

A. COURSE OUTCOMES: OUR OVERALL GOALS

By the end of the course people will be able:

- To articulate the gospel for themselves and communicate it to others, without embarrassment or distortion
- To understand how the above actions help us to interpret and practise the breadth and depth of the gospel
- To recognize how the good news of Jesus Christ is rooted in the book of Acts and in the 4 Gospels

B. AIMS FOR THIS WEEK: WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE

1. To explore what it means to teach and equip others
2. To consider how Jesus and the early church engaged with people who were lost and confused

C. PLAN YOUR SESSION: A CHECKLIST

- Pray for your session and for those who will attend
- Read the passages, perhaps in different translations, to bring out the meaning
- Read the notes summary for the week
- Note the key words and other passages you can explore if you have time
- Read through the session plan
- Remember to review your session afterwards

D. SUMMARY FOR THE WEEK: TO INFORM YOUR THINKING

From the very beginning God has been alongside those he has made. In the garden of Eden God is pictured as walking with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day. Through the Old Testament he gave his people leaders (women and men) to be with them, to guide them and to draw them back to himself when they go astray. He also gave them a pattern for living which distinguished them from the peoples around them. With the coming of the Holy Spirit, this pattern is now written on hearts not tablets of stone. Once Jesus has returned to heaven, the Holy Spirit is with his people, walking alongside them in the same way he had done.

One of Jesus' key approaches was to teach people about the Father. He used images from daily life to explain deeper truths to them often using parables. However, he especially invested in 12 men and the women who went with them, walking alongside them as they experienced working with the Father and seeing things through the Father's eyes. He also promises to send the Holy Spirit who will lead them into all truth once he has returned to the Father.

In today's reading we have Jesus walking alongside Cleopas and his companion. Jesus

draws near to them and, beginning at the level they could understand, he explains the deeper things of God to them. Apollos is already a disciple and teaching the people about Jesus: he is a powerful and fervent preacher. But with the help of Priscilla and Aquila he grows in his understanding of his ministry and as a result becomes more effective in serving God.

Paul has discipled Timothy, to enable him to grow as a young Christian leader. How intentional are we in discipling not just fully grown people, but those in their teens and single digits? We really need to do more than just baptize them: we need to help them grow into mature members of the body of Christ too.

E. WORDS FOR THE WEEK: KEY WORDS FOR THIS SESSION

Comforter: *Paraklesis*. A calling to be alongside (from para=beside, kaleo=to call). The Holy Spirit is called to be alongside his church, just as Christ had been alongside the disciples (John 14:16 another comforter). It comes from a court of justice where a legal assistant or advocate pleads the case for another.

Disciple: *mathetes/mathetria*. A learner, literally thought followed by action. One who walks with Jesus, is becoming like Jesus and is serving with Jesus. In this way they imitate the teacher they are following.

F. OTHER SCRIPTURES TO REFERENCE

Matthew 28:20 ...and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

John 14:26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

2 Timothy 2:2 and what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well.

G. LIVING THE MISSION OF JESUS

This week's material fits in with Strategic Priority 1: to grow authentic disciples. What does an authentic disciple look like? How can we help people grow up in their faith and keep growing throughout their earthly life? Teach here means so much more than tell – the question is how do people learn, and for some that will mean as they do it rather than in the classroom. So how can we come alongside them and spur them on to love and good works? If we get this right we will see a passionate personal spirituality in the lives of our churches too.

H. REVIEWING YOUR SESSION

We would encourage you to spend a little time reviewing your session once you have led it through.

Here are some questions to think about:

- What went well and why – what evidence is there that it did?
- What would you change if you did it again?
- What advice would you pass on to the person who is leading the group next time?

CORE MATERIAL

Use the following structure to guide you through your session. Each part has a suggested time to enable you to be finished in 90 minutes.

1 OPEN WITH PRAYER (3 MINUTES)

Use these verses from the Psalms to begin your session

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go

I will counsel you and watch over you (Psalm 32:8)

Teach me to do your will for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground (Psalm 143:10)

All my springs are in you (Psalm 87:7)

Or this classic prayer from St Richard of Chichester:

Thanks be to thee, my Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits thou hast given me, for all the pains and insults thou hast borne for me.

O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, and follow thee more nearly, day by day. Amen.

Or

Simply invite the Holy Spirit to come and lead you through this session.

2 INTRODUCTION (2 MINUTES)

Read the following aloud or use your own words to explain what it says:

Today we are thinking about how we can help people grow in their faith, how they can grow up to be fully like Christ. Jesus came alongside Cleopas and his companion after the disappointment of the cross and walked with them. As a result these two were among the disciples who then continued Jesus' work after he had returned to the Father. Apollos had a key ministry in the church of preaching and teaching. Priscilla and Aquila got alongside him and helped him develop his gifts and effectiveness in teaching and proclaiming the gospel. In a similar way Paul discipled Timothy, a younger leader, to enable him to be all that he could be for the work of the Kingdom of God.

How are we intentionally helping our children, young people and wider church family to grow up in their faith? How can we walk with others in an intentional and fruitful way?

Now read Acts 18:24-28

²⁴ Now there came to Ephesus a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria. He was an eloquent man, well-versed in the scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the Way of the Lord; and he spoke with burning enthusiasm and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the Way of God to him more accurately. ²⁷ And when he wished to cross over to Achaia, the believers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. On his arrival he greatly helped those who through grace had become believers, ²⁸ for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus.

Questions:

Apollos was passing on what he had been taught – the good news about Jesus Christ. Who passed the faith onto you? How did you “hear” it?

Apollos only knew the baptism of John. Perhaps that was the area he needed to grow in. The result of Priscilla and Aquila working with him was that he was recommended for even wider service (27). In the local church, how do we work out what people need to learn, and uncover what areas they need to grow in?

What methods of teaching could we use to disciple people today? Does age come into it?

4 WORKING IT OUT (10 MINUTES)

Either watch the 3rd film on the USB stick about how people are communicating the gospel today.

Or

Read one or two of the following examples out loud as examples of what people are doing about this in the Diocese of Winchester.

Schools Work

Christ Church, Winchester goes into 24 primary schools seven times a year to teach children in a fun and gentle way what Christians believe. We speak to over 4,500 children each time. And the children do understand what we say. During one assembly on Jonah, one child put his hand up to say, “Why did Jonah think he could run away from God? Last time you came in, you said God is everywhere...” (Christ Church Winchester)

Teaching Children about Jesus

Within our benefice we have two teams of people who provide this innovative retelling of Bible stories to children in two or three of our local schools. Children are able to listen and watch adults dressing up and acting out both familiar and unfamiliar stories from the Bible which are brought to life. Open the Book enables children to engage with and reflect on the stories. Many children will not have the opportunity to hear these stories and how they relate to children in the 21st

century. When we recap from the previous week, it is clear that the children listened and remembered (Open the Book, Hook).

<http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/about-bible-society/our-work/open-the-book/>

5 COFFEE BREAK (15 MINUTES)

During this time of coffee encourage people to talk about what they have heard and seen. Make sure everyone gets a chance to contribute if they want to.

6 TEACHING EFFECTIVELY

When Jesus met Cleopas and his friend on the road to Emmaus they had many doubts and questions about Jesus. We may feel the same, and so may others, those with whom we share our stories of faith.

Divide the group into 2 and give each subgroup a large sheet of paper.

One group is to label their “Difficulties people have with the Christian faith”. The other group is to label their sheet “Difficulties Christians have in sharing their stories”.

After a few minutes swap the sheets over and continue.

Finally, display both sheets and discuss your findings.

For personal reflection:

Which ‘difficulties’ you identify with from each list?

7 COMMUNICATING MY STORY

Choose one of the difficulties you identified with, and get ready to talk about it with another.

Now get together in 2s and 3s. Decide who will speak first, who will listen first (and who will observe first, if you are in a 3). Take it in turns to explain the difficulty you identified (rather uncertainly).

You will have 6 minutes each if you are in a pair (4 minutes each if you are in a 3).

Remember, the listener can offer a reflection or open question to help the “rather uncertain” speaker.

In the same groups, use the enclosed sheet on listening skills to assess your listening and responding skills (if you are in a 3, the observer will have a chance to reflect on what they saw).

Together as a large group:

What did you learn about the sort of things people struggle with about the Christian faith? How did you feel talking to another person about your struggles?

Together begin to explore the “problem of pain” and start to work out what you could say to people who find this is an obstacle to faith.

8 THIS WEEK’S TASK

During the week:

- Proactively take opportunities to ask people about their struggles with issues of faith
- Share some of your own with other Christians too

9 PRAYER

Close this session in prayer, giving thanks for the insight and comfort the Holy Spirit brings when we’re struggling, and for those he has called to walk alongside us in our faith journey.

10 RESOURCES

The sheet on listening skills and the individual booklet is available on the USB stick and on the website.

11 NEXT WEEK’S THEME

Next week we will be looking at the opportunities that come to proclaim boldly, if we have been living out the themes from the other weeks.

