

FF07

Age 11-14

Being a Messenger of the Gospel

Bible Verses: Matthew 28:16-20, John 4:1-29 & 39-42, Romans 10:15b, Romans 15:13 and 1 Peter 3:15.

To help the young people to have the confidence to share the Gospel message of Jesus Christ through the relationships they are building on their frontline.

Leader's notes

'...for most of us, evangelism is like a trip to the dentist: we know we are meant to go, and when we get there we know we are meant to open our mouths, but we are rather afraid that when we do, extremely unpleasant and painful things will happen to us.'

(Mark Greene, 'Fruitfulness On The Frontline, p161)

This pretty much sums up how most of us feel about evangelism – it is like going to the dentist! It's something that gets our stomachs churning, the palms of our hands sweating and our mouths dry. It's the sort of thing that we put off, that we put to the bottom of our 'to-do list' or we simply ignore it and hope it goes away.

Why do we feel this way? Why does it feel so scary telling people about something so wonderful? Is it the cringe-worthy way we have seen it done? That sort of 'Smile! Jesus loves you!' kind of thing? Why are we so reluctant to *'give the reason for the hope that [we] have?'* (1 Peter 3:15)

So if we as leaders, adults, young adults find this hard, we can understand and relate to how hard it is for the children and young people we meet with. In a place like their frontlines where they want to be accepted and to 'fit in', how hard is it to say the reason for their hope in life – being a Christian and having a living faith?

Today's session is about encouraging the young people you work with to give the idea of evangelism over to God. To not fear it, but to let God take control and to prompt them when it's their turn to speak. To pray to God so that He can let them know when the right time is so that it is not awkward or uncomfortable for anyone. Rather than just running in without any thought or prayer given and leaving the person we are 'preaching' at rather lost for words and not in a good way!

Greene says that *'We do our bit. God does his. In his time'*(p179). This is a really important thing for the group to remember, it is all about God's perfect timing and staying close to Him so that we know when He wants us to take action on His behalf.

Greene talks about being 'intentional' (p162), this doesn't mean forcing our faith down people's throats, but it does mean to be looking and praying for the opportunities when we can say that we are as we are because of our faith in Jesus.

This session might be a bit tricky for members of your group who are still trying to work out if they believe in God or not, however it is still relevant to them. For them, they need to seek the opportunities to have discussions with others about the fact that they are looking into what God is about and what it means to be a believer. It's the perfect opportunity for them to invite someone to come along to this

group with them and to help them find out more.

Make sure you are available after the session to offer prayer and support to your young people and to help them to find the confidence to be intentional for God on their frontlines as messengers of the gospel.

Fizz Bang

Warming Up

10 mins

 Game

Put a table for each team at one end of the room with a large glass containing two Alka-Seltzers.

Ask the group to stand at the other end of the room in a straight line.

When you shout 'Go' the first member of each team must take a mouthful of water, run to the table and spit their mouthful of water into the glass with the Alka-Seltzer. They then run back to the next person in their team who they tag and who then takes a mouthful of water and does the same.

The first team to make both their Alka-Seltzers dissolve wins.

The Point: Just for fun.

Equipment

A large glass with two Alka-Seltzers in and a table for each team and a cup with water in for each person. You may also like to have some paper towels to hand to tidy up the players and the room.

Care and Share

Getting Started

10 mins

 Visual And Audio Clips

Show the following short video clip together which shows the 'Free hugs' campaign:

<http://www.freehugscampaign.org/>

Discuss with the group whether they would be prepared to stand and give hugs to strangers? Now ask them how readily they would tell other people about coming along to this group and learning more about Jesus or even tell them about why they are a Christian and the difference has made in their lives?

Explain that today's session is about how we use the relationships we have been building on our frontline over the past few weeks, to share something of what we believe in about Jesus or why we are trying to find out more about Him.

This is not an easy thing to do, and quite often we will find ourselves shying away from opportunities that occur when we can tell others why we behave the way we do – because of our beliefs.

Encourage the group to listen to each other closely during this session as they seek to share an important message.

The Point: To introduce the topic of the session through a video clip to help them to think about what they are going to be learning about.

Equipment

The means to play the link below.

I Finally Understand

Getting Started



Visual And Audio Clips

Show the following clip from 'Frozen'. The clip starts as Anna and Kristoff are searching for Elsa and ends as Anna and Kristoff run away from the snow monster and Olaf says '*this just got a whole lot harder*'.

Clip start time: 00:48:47

Clip end time: 00:56:37

Length of clip: approximately 8 minutes.

Anna was trying to find Elsa with a message of good news – she wanted to help Elsa to live a normal life even though she was cursed. She finally understood and wanted to tell Elsa that they could work it out together – that she wasn't alone.

Elsa did not want to hear this message; she was scared and wanted to be alone. She didn't want to hurt Anna again, but she ends up doing just that. She cannot accept that Anna can help so she not only tells her to leave but also sends a snow monster to chase them away.

Explain that today's session is about how the young people can share the gospel message with people on their frontline. Through their actions and behaviour, hopefully they will create relationships with people, who will then want to hear what they believe in. However, this is not always an easy thing to do.

Just like with Anna and her message for Elsa, people may not want to hear what we have to say, however it is important that people not only see our faith in action but that they also hear the gospel message.


The Point: To introduce the theme through a film clip to help the group's thoughts and discussion on the subject.

Equipment

A copy of the film 'Frozen' and the means to play it.

Smiling Works!

Digging In

 Bible Study

Read the story of Anita from Mark Greene's book 'Fruitfulness On The Frontline'. The story starts on p165 under the title '*Of car parks and car boots*' and finishes on p166 with the sentence '*And it began with a smile.*'

Discuss with the group:

What do you think of Anita's story and the deep conversation she had with someone she had never spoken to, just because she smiled at her?

Who do you actually 'know' on your frontline and who are you on 'smiling' terms with?

How can you initiate a conversation with these people?

Give out the Bibles and ask the group to turn to Matthew 28:16-20. Ask what this passage tells us about why Jesus wants us to tell others of His love?

Sum up by saying that the passage tells us that Jesus told His disciples to go and tell other people about Him; to go and tell others about the gift of eternal life with God through belief in Jesus' death and sacrifice on the cross.

This shows us how important that our actions are at some point – of God's choosing – accompanied by the words of our testimony and the goodness of God. The important thing here is to remember that it is up to God when this happens. We can know when the right time is by praying to God, seeking His guidance and prompting in our relationship with this person.

The Point: To look at someone who shared their faith, as a result of them smiling at someone at work on a daily basis; to encourage the young people to seek opportunities to share their faith.


Equipment

A copy of Mark Greene's book 'Fruitfulness On The Frontline' and Bibles.

Four-Step Process

Digging In

20 mins

 Bible Study

Ask the young people to give examples of what they have been doing on their frontlines to show love, truth, grace, justice or anything else they have done to show Jesus' love to others.

As they share their experiences and how they felt, ask them if people asked them why they were doing it. If so, what did they say?

It's good that we want to do things to help people, but sometimes we can be reluctant to share the

reason why we are doing it – because we believe in Jesus.

Give out the Bibles and ask them to turn to 1 Peter 3:15 and say that we must embrace these chances to tell the people we are helping that this is the reason we are doing it.

Greene suggests that we follow a 4 step plan (p161):

Praying for a particular person

Caring

Sharing truth

Offering paths forward.

First we pray to God for a certain person, asking for opportunities to help them and share His love with them. Second we care for them through our words and actions as we build a relationship with them. Thirdly we share our faith with them when they ask or question our reasons for caring and fourthly, we offer them the opportunity to find out more like coming along to our group, or a fun event that the church is doing etc.

Greene sums it all up with '*We do our bit. God does his. In his time.*' (p179)

Discuss with the young people how they can put these steps into action on their frontline.

The Point: To encourage the young people to see the importance of being intentional about their faith and making the most of the opportunities God gives them to share it with the people on their frontlines.

Equipment

Bibles, paper and pens.

Lord, Pour Out Your Spirit

Response

5 mins

✝️ Worship and Reflection

Play the worship song 'Lord Pour Out Your Spirit/Great Awakening' to the group. As they listen to the words, invite them to pray to God and seek His guidance as to whom He would like them to speak to on their frontlines.

At the end of the song, say a prayer for the group to seek opportunities that will be given to them by God, to share their faith in Jesus with someone in particular on their frontline.

The Point: To encourage the group to reflect upon the session and worship God.

Equipment

A copy of the worship song 'Lord Pour Out Your Spirit'/'Great Awakening' and the means to play it.

