

SESSION 7:

MESSENGER OF THE GOSPEL

'How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"' Isaiah 52:7

Key Question: How might I be a messenger of the gospel on my frontline?

Aims: To grow in confidence and intentionality in sharing the good news of Jesus with those on our frontlines.

Core Text: 1 Peter 3:15-16

Materials: Paper for exercise in pairs, large sheet of paper and pens for prayer.

Thinking Back (5 mins)

In the last session we looked at being a mouthpiece for truth and justice.

- Did the last session change the way you saw things on your frontline?
- Did anyone in the group have an opportunity to speak up in a particular situation?

Pre-Film Discussion (5 mins)

Today, we're looking at being a messenger of the gospel – sharing about Jesus with our words.

How does the word 'evangelism' make you feel?





PLAY FILM (9 mins)

Questions to Discuss after the Film (10 mins)

Mark began by making three key points:

1. God wants people saved.
 2. It is God who saves people, not us.
 3. We have some role in this, however small.
- How much do your own thinking and practice reflect these three statements?
 - Do they change your view of evangelism at all?
 - What do you find encouraging about the story of Anita and Renata? What do you find challenging?

Bible Reflection (10 mins)

1 PETER 3:13-16

This letter was written to a group of churches spread throughout the region that we now call Turkey. Although the churches may not have been suffering 'official' persecution from the state, they were facing all kinds of opposition as they sought to live for Christ on their frontlines. Peter knew that these men, women and children were really up against it and so he wrote to them. But the content of his letter is not just about 'hanging on in there'; rather, he encourages them to courageously continue to do good knowing that it would provoke people to ask questions. Not everyone would react well to their responses, but, importantly, some would.

- Imagine you were a Christian back then, facing persecution and opposition. How might you be tempted to respond?
- The broader sweep of 1 Peter makes it clear that verbal witness is intrinsically linked to the witness of our actions. People will be provoked to ask questions when they see our good deeds (see especially 1 Peter 2:11-12). What might you learn from this?
- In verse 15, what do you think Peter means by 'always be prepared...'? How might you make sure that you too are 'prepared'?
- Look at verses 15 and 16. In what manner are we encouraged to share the gospel? Why do you think the way we share the gospel matters so much?





Exercise in Pairs (20 mins)

Who in particular on your frontline might God be prompting you to reach out to? Take a few moments to pray and once you have identified someone, reflect on the following questions. Once you've jotted down some thoughts, talk them through with the person next to you.

- How would you describe this person generally?
- What do you think is important to this person?
- What do you think they believe about God?
- What specific things could you do to bless this person practically?
- What specific things could you do to aid their spiritual development?
- What might you do in the next two weeks? How about in the coming months?

Praying Forwards (10 mins)

Praying for our frontline friends to come to know Jesus is something we need to commit to doing over the long term. It will be easier to persevere in prayer if we get into the pattern of doing it as a group as well as in our own personal prayers.

- Using a large sheet of paper, ask each group member to write the names of one or two people they want to commit to praying for.
- Take some time to pray for one another and those whose names are written down. You might like to pray specifically for the person your discussion partner told you about earlier.
- Keep the piece of paper in a safe place, and make a commitment to take some time to revisit it in some of your future sessions together. Be prepared to ask each other how these friends are doing, whether you have seen God at work in their lives and what opportunities you have had to talk with them intentionally.



Takeaway Action

Take some time during the week ahead to pray specifically for the people you committed to pray for during the 'Praying Forwards' exercise.

